Rachael Ray
every day
TAKE A BITE OUTTA LIFE!®
29
HEARTY DISHES TO WARM YOU UP!
GIFT IDEAS GALORE
THROW A GREAT PARTY!
Fast appetizers
Meals for a crowd
Festive punches
EXCLUSIVE!
Christmas with Rachael
Recipes from her new book p. 100
30 Cookie Hacks! p. 90
LESS TIME BAKING, MORE TIME EATING!
Holiday food, fun & finds!
168 ways to celebrate the season
RACHAELRAYMAG.COM
DECEMBER 2015

This Season Count On A Good Excuse To Eat Too Much

AND KNOWING RIGHT WHEN YOUR PACKAGES ARRIVE.

INTRODUCING REAL-TIME DELIVERY NOTIFICATIONS*

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TIPS FOR **STRESS-FREE GIFTING** FROM **RACHAEL RAY**

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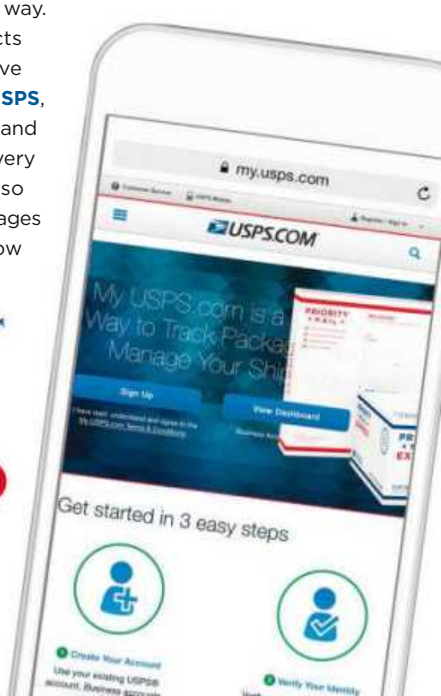

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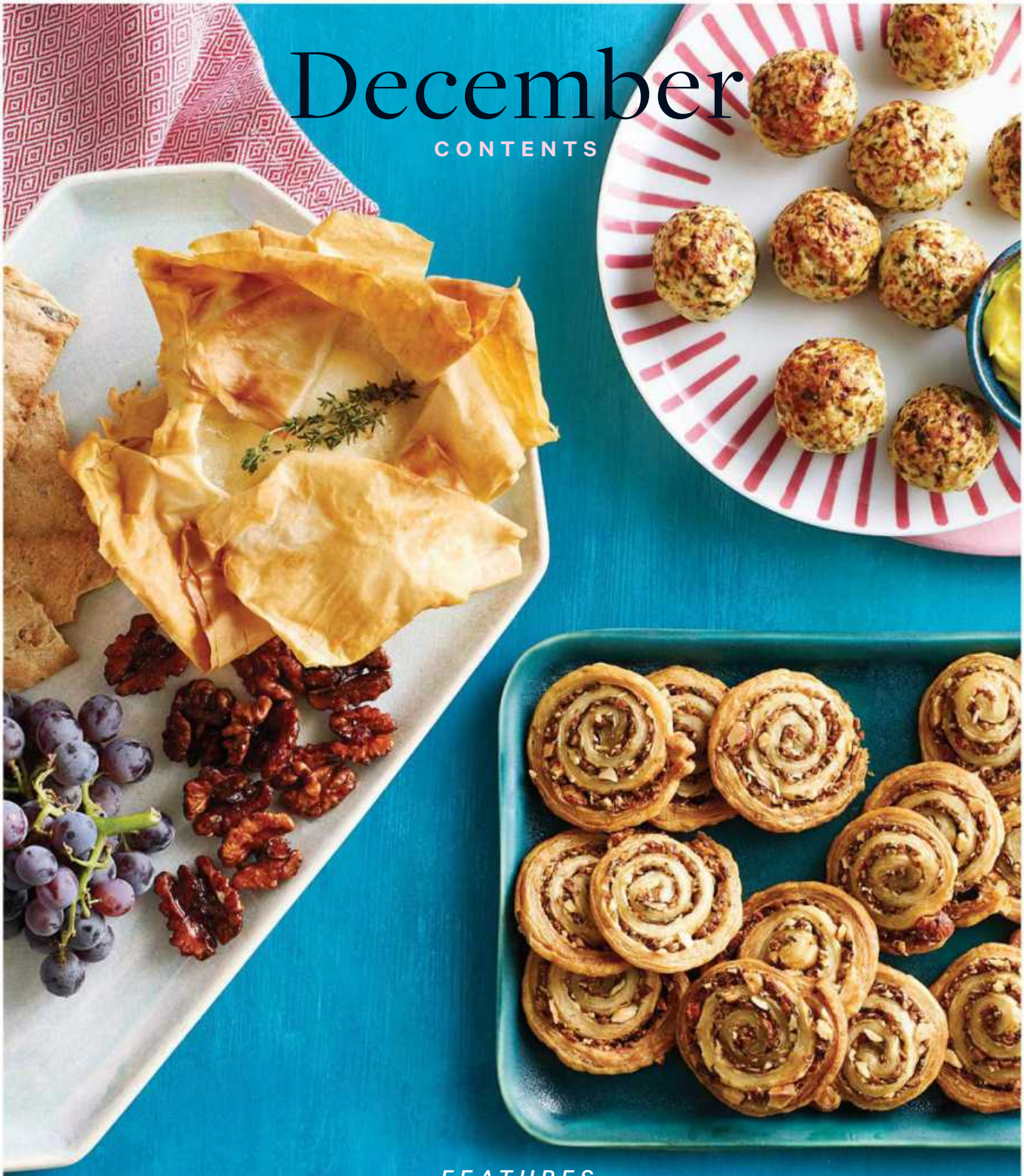
December

CONTENTS



FEATURES

55 THE RACHAEL RAY EVERY DAY HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE
Unwrap gift ideas for all the people on your list, from your pet-obsessed neighbor to your perplexing tween cousin.

80 RACHAEL RAY'S 30-MINUTE MEALS
Rach is cooking up a storm to make your December extra delicious—any night of the month!

90 30 HOLIDAY COOKIE HACKS
These game-changer cookie recipes and genius decorating shortcuts will make the season super sweet.

100 EVERYONE IS ITALIAN ON SUNDAY
An exclusive look at Rach's new cookbook, her most heartfelt one yet. You're going to want to gather round the table for this epic feast!

December

FOOD & FUN

29 **IN SEASON**
Get fresh with pomegranates.

35 **FAST IDEAS**
Fifteen easy recipes you can make in a snap. So long, holiday stress!

47 **FLAVOR WHEEL**
Six tasty ways to make party nuts way more fun

HOME & AWAY

49 **LIFE OF THE PARTY**
Knock, knock! These head-turning no-bake holiday houses are anything but cookie-cutter.

FAVES & SAVES

67 **COUNTER INTELLIGENCE**
The measuring tools you need to make sure you're ready for baking season

71 **SUPERMARKET SMARTS**
Party-starting holiday punches; battle of the granolas; ways to use leftover eggnog; and more

76 **LOOKING GOOD**
Something smells amazing... oh wait, it's you! Treat yourself (literally!) with dessert-scented beauty goodies.

FOUND IN EVERY ISSUE

8 **RECIPE INDEX**
Our list of recipes in the issue

Makeover Meal booklet
SKINNY STEAKHOUSE
Ditch the doggy bag! Make steakhouse faves at home—and in a healthier way.

13 **LETTER FROM RACH**
Rachael's keep-it-real holiday advice

14 **RACH'S MOST-WANTED LIST!**
See the gifts our leading lady is giving this year.

19 **WORD OF MOUTH**
Crushing on #foodporn; winery workouts; coolest food halls; and more

115 **INSIDE OUR TEST KITCHEN**
Genius tips and tricks

118 **PET PROJECT**
Coconut snowball treats for your favorite furry pal

120 **KITCHEN CAMEO**
Tracee Ellis Ross of *Black-ish* whips up one of Rach's hearty salads.

ON THE COVER Photography Jeff Lipsky; food styling by Simon Andrews; fashion styling by Jane Harrison Fox; makeup by Joe J. Simon for Giorgio Armani Beauty; hair by Patty Mocarski; sweater by Peruvian Connection; turtleneck by Majestic Clothing; leggings by Alice + Olivia. Soft Sugar Cookies recipe, page 97.

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"Hot chocolate is good, hot chocolate with marshmallows is better—but hot chocolate with toasted marshmallows (I do it under the broiler) is the best!"

Rachael Ray every day

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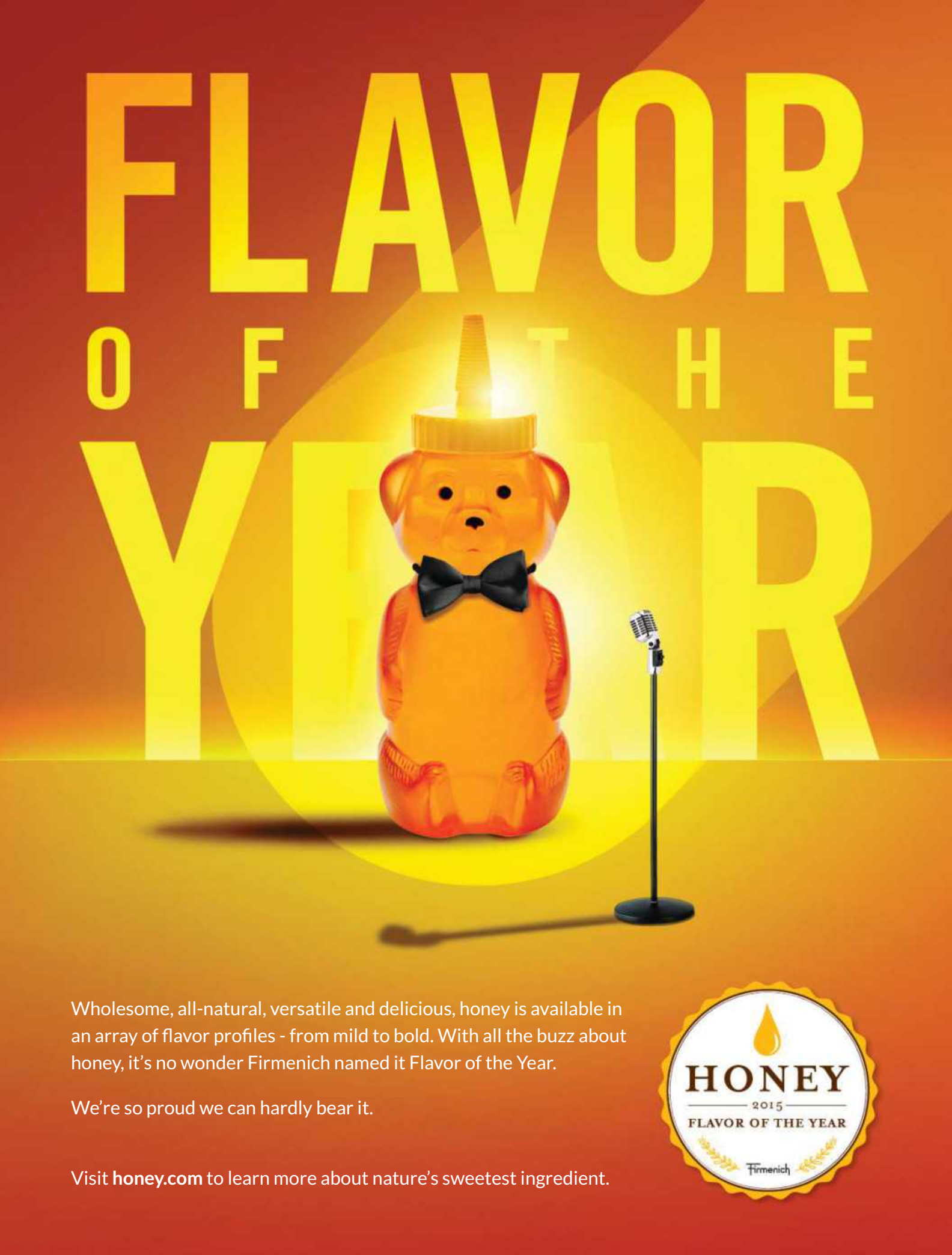
FLAVOR OF THE YEAR



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DECEMBER 2015

recipe

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

39
Sunnyside Eggs & Winter Greens

89
White Pizza Frittata

BURGERS & SAMMIES

10
Big Blue Turkey Burgers

39
Veggie Grilled Cheese Sandwiches

SOUPS, SALADS & SIDES

88
Italian-Style Rotisserie-Chicken Noodle Soup with Green Beans

B
EVOO & Chive Mashed Potatoes

B
Trim Creamed Spinach

36
Creamy Cauliflower Soup

106
Celery, Portobello & Parsley Salad

109
Green Beans with Shallots

109
Cauliflower with Rosemary au Gratin

SNACKS & STARTERS

40
Double-Potato Latkes

40
Mini Muffulettas

43
Chicken Meatballs with Curried Dipping Sauce

43
Olive-Almond Puff Pastry Pinwheels

43
Fried Plantains with Avocado Sauce

43
Apple & Crab Canapés

43
Baked Cheese Plate

104
Sausage-Stuffed Spicy Olives

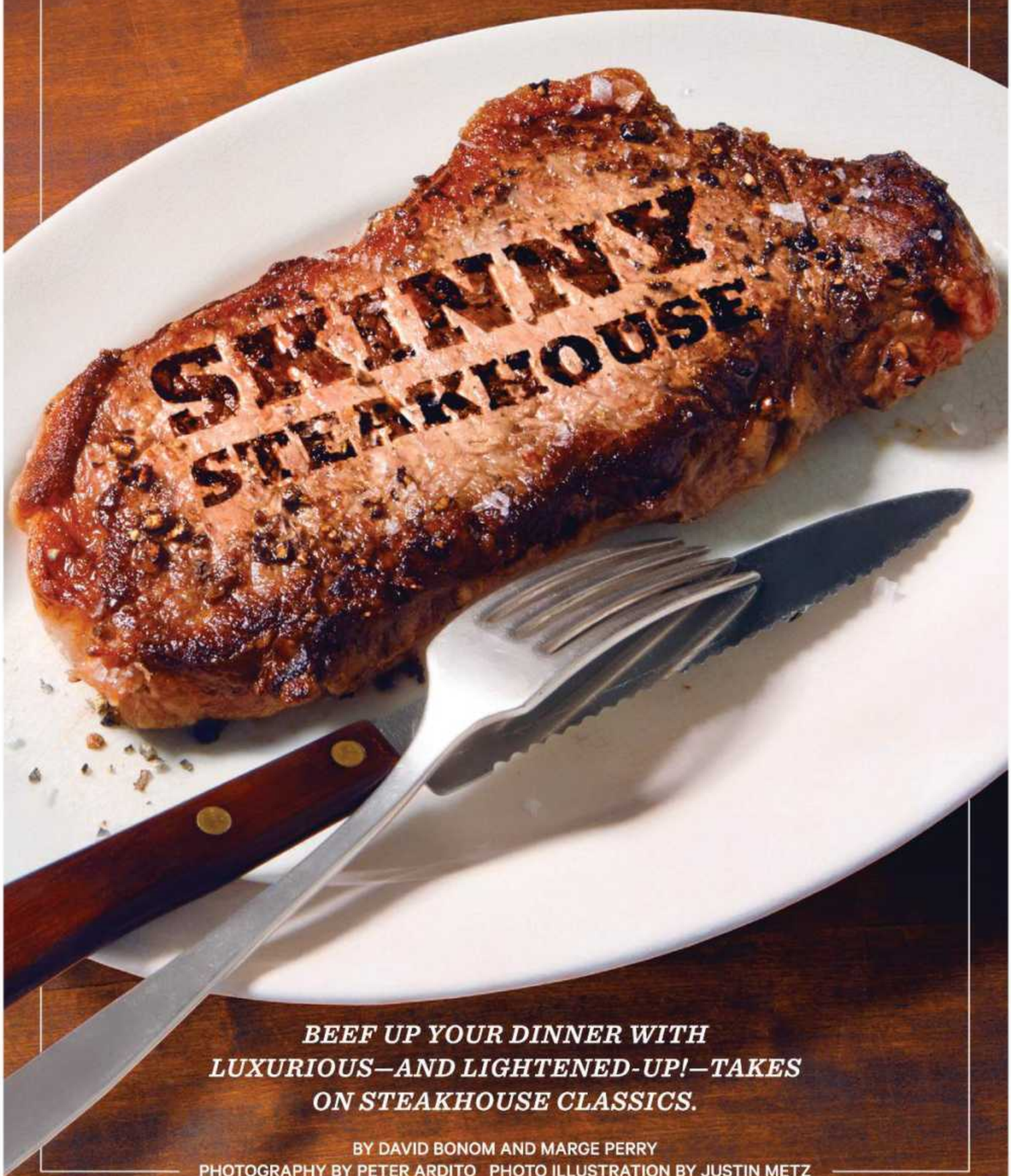
104
Butternut-Sage Crostini

POULTRY

Roasted Pomegranate Chicken 30

36
Mediterranean Chicken Salad

83
Chicken with Olives, Capers & Kale



BEEF UP YOUR DINNER WITH LUXURIOUS—AND LIGHTENED-UP!—TAKES ON STEAKHOUSE CLASSICS.

BY DAVID BONOM AND MARGE PERRY
PHOTOGRAPHY BY PETER ARDITO PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY JUSTIN METZ

Lean and Luscious New York Strip

1 tbsp. butter • 2 top loin strip steaks (boneless, 1¼ lbs. total; bone-in, 1¾ lbs. total), about ¾ inch thick, trimmed ➤ In a cast-iron or other heavy skillet, melt the butter over medium-high until the foam subsides. Season the steaks with ½ tsp. salt and ¼ tsp. pepper. Cook until browned, about 4 minutes per side for medium-rare. Transfer to a cutting board and let rest 5 minutes. Trim the steak from the bone; slice thinly across grain. Serves 4.

Slimmed-Down Steak Sauce

⅓ cup ketchup • ¼ cup fresh orange juice • 2 tbsp. balsamic vinegar • 2 tsp. Dijon mustard • 2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce • 1 tsp. molasses • 1 tsp. sugar • ½ tsp. garlic powder • ¼ tsp. onion powder • ⅛ tsp. cayenne ➤ In a small saucepan, combine all the ingredients. Bring to a simmer over medium and cook, stirring often, until slightly thickened, 5 to 6 minutes. Let cool. Makes ⅔ cup.

Healthy Béarnaise

3 tbsp. canola mayonnaise • 1 tbsp. chopped fresh tarragon • 1 tbsp. chopped shallot • 1 tsp. tarragon vinegar • 2 tbsp. unsalted butter, melted ➤ In a small bowl, whisk the mayo, tarragon, shallot, vinegar, 2 tsp. water, ⅛ tsp. salt and ⅛ tsp. pepper. Whisk in the butter. Makes ½ cup.

FOOD STYLING BY MICHELLE GATTON; PROP STYLING BY COURTNEY DE WET.

Cuts above

Cuts like ribeye are steakhouse darlings because of their rich marbling (aka fat). New York strip is a good compromise because it's moderately lean but still has enough marbling to keep it juicy.

Use canola mayo as a base for this shortcut version of a classic béarnaise and you'll save time and calories.

BEFORE	AFTER
196 CALORIES	84 CALORIES
18g FAT	9g FAT

Restaurant steaks are often drenched in butter, but a tablespoon delivers plenty of flavor.

BEFORE	AFTER
894 CALORIES	250 CALORIES
58g FAT	12g FAT

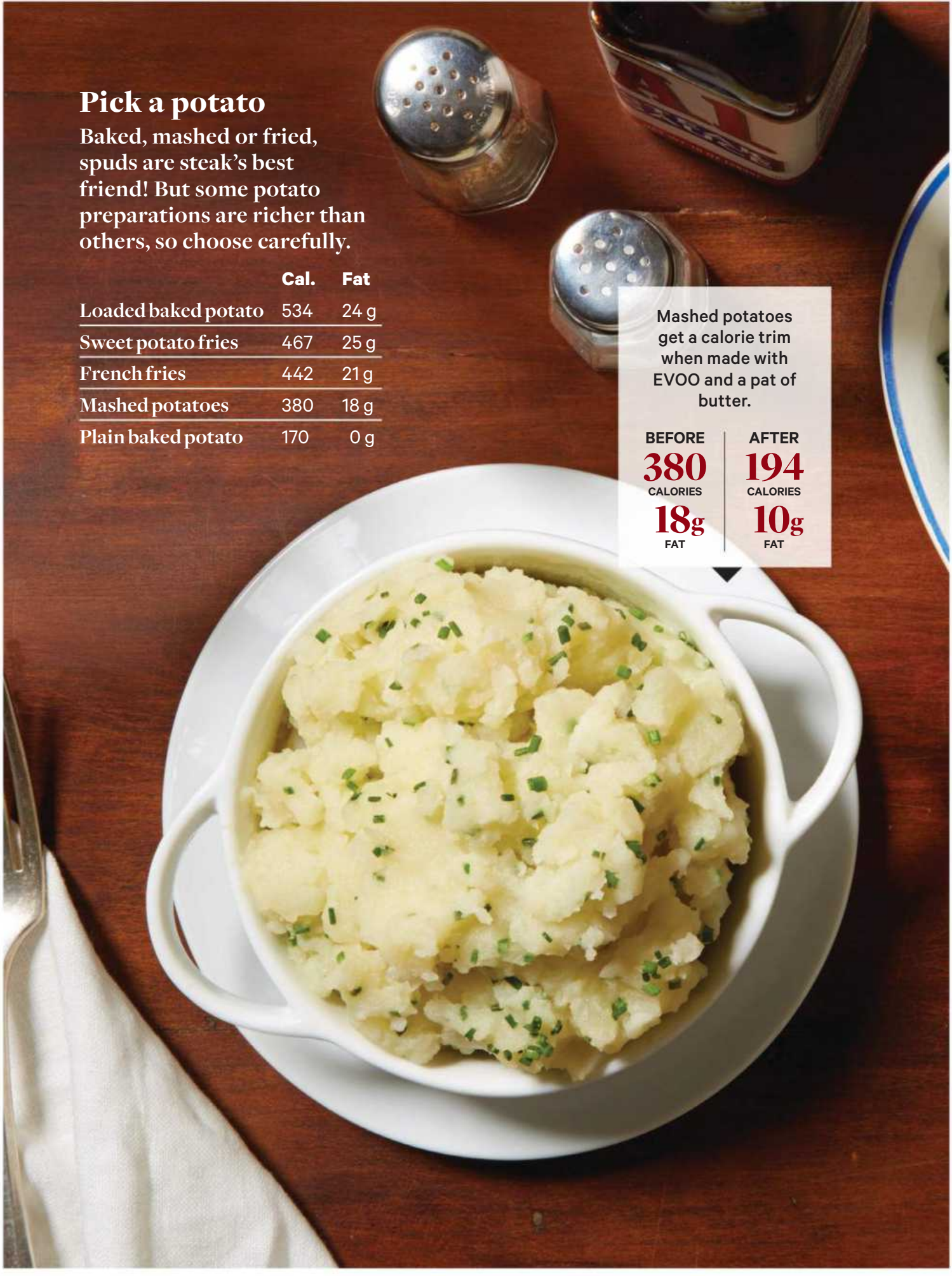
Pick a potato

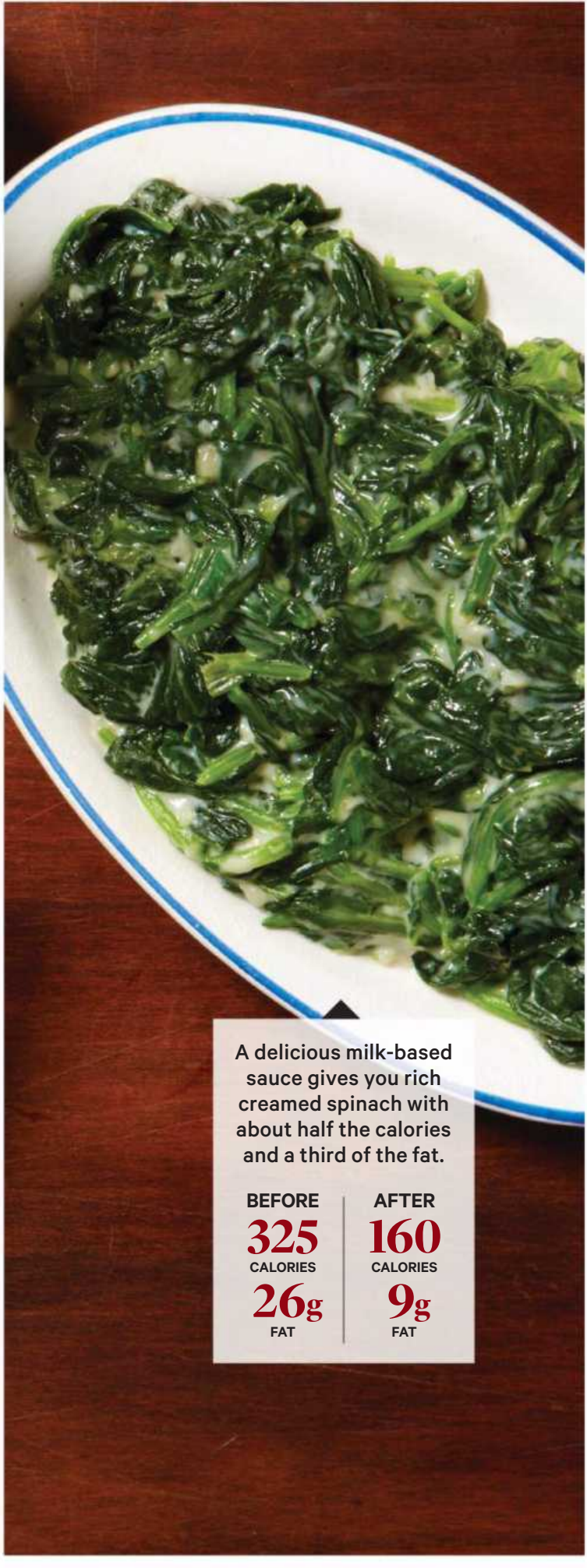
Baked, mashed or fried, spuds are steak's best friend! But some potato preparations are richer than others, so choose carefully.

	Cal.	Fat
Loaded baked potato	534	24 g
Sweet potato fries	467	25 g
French fries	442	21 g
Mashed potatoes	380	18 g
Plain baked potato	170	0 g

Mashed potatoes get a calorie trim when made with EVOO and a pat of butter.

BEFORE	AFTER
380 CALORIES	194 CALORIES
18g FAT	10g FAT





A delicious milk-based sauce gives you rich creamed spinach with about half the calories and a third of the fat.

BEFORE	AFTER
325 CALORIES	160 CALORIES
26g FAT	9g FAT

EVOO & Chive Mashed Potatoes

1 lb. russet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces • ½ cup 2 percent milk • 2 tbsp. EVOO • 1 tbsp. unsalted butter • ¼ cup chopped fresh chives ➤ In a medium saucepan, cover the potatoes with 2 inches of water. Bring to a boil over high and cook until tender, 12 to 14 minutes. Meanwhile, in a small saucepan, heat the milk, EVOO, butter, ½ tsp. salt and ¼ tsp. pepper over medium until the milk is warm and the butter melts, about 2 minutes. Drain the potatoes; return to the medium saucepan. Pour the milk mixture over the potatoes; mash with a potato masher until mostly smooth. Stir in the chives. Serves 4.

Trim Creamed Spinach

3 bags (8 oz. each) fresh spinach • 2 tbsp. unsalted butter • 2 cloves garlic, minced • 5 tsp. flour • 1 cup 2 percent milk • ⅛ tsp. freshly grated or ground nutmeg • ¼ cup grated Parmesan ➤ Heat a large skillet over medium-high. Add 1 bag spinach; cook, turning with tongs, until just starting to wilt, about 2 minutes. Repeat with the second bag. Stir in the third bag and cook until completely wilted, about 2 minutes more. Transfer spinach to a colander; let cool 10 minutes, then squeeze out the liquid and coarsely chop. In a medium saucepan, melt the butter over medium. Add the garlic; stir until just starting to brown, about 2 minutes. Add the flour. Cook, stirring often, until pale golden, about 3 minutes. Whisk in the milk, nutmeg, ⅛ tsp. salt and ⅛ tsp. pepper. Cook, whisking constantly, until thickened and just starting to boil, about 3 minutes. Add the cheese; whisk until melted, about 30 seconds. Stir in the spinach. Cook, stirring, until the spinach is heated through and evenly coated with the sauce, about 1 minute. Serves 4.

For a prettier, tastier, better-for-you treat, use fresh strawberry topping instead of the canned stuff.

BEFORE	AFTER
881 CALORIES	339 CALORIES
60g FAT	15g FAT

Light Strawberry Cheesecake

SERVES **12** PREP **20 MIN (PLUS CHILLING)** BAKE **1 HR 15 MIN**

- **Cooking spray**
- **1 cup graham cracker crumbs (about 7 whole crackers)**
- **4 tbsp. plus 1 cup sugar**
- **3 tbsp. unsalted butter, melted**
- **2 packages (8 oz. each) Neufchâtel cheese, at room temperature**
- **1 1/2 cups light sour cream**
- **2 large eggs**
- **1 tbsp. pure vanilla extract**
- **1/3 cup flour**
- **1 qt. strawberries, hulled and sliced**
- **1/3 cup strawberry jam**

1. Preheat the oven to 350°. Coat a 9-inch springform pan with cooking spray. In a small bowl, stir the crumbs and 2 tbsp. sugar. Mix in the butter and 2 tsp. water until the crumbs hold together; press evenly into the bottom of the pan. Bake until deep golden brown, about 15 minutes. Let cool in the pan on a rack. Reduce oven to 325°.

2. Meanwhile, in a medium bowl using an electric mixer, beat the Neufchâtel and sour cream on medium-high until smooth. Add the eggs, vanilla and 1 cup sugar; beat until smooth. Add the flour; beat on low to blend. Pour the filling over the crust.

3. Bake until the center of the cake is just set but still jiggles slightly, 55 to 60 minutes. Run a knife around the sides of the pan to release the cake. Let cool in the pan on a rack about 1 hour, then cover and refrigerate until cold, at least 3 hours or overnight.

4. In a medium bowl, toss the berries with 2 tbsp. sugar; let stand until juices begin to form, about 10 minutes. In a small saucepan, stir the jam over medium-high until melted, 1 to 2 minutes; stir into the berries. Chill 1 hour.

5. Remove the sides from the springform pan. Spoon the topping over the cake.

Steakhouse menu do's and don'ts

Eat your heart out—and keep it healthy—with these healthful tips.

STARTERS

BUYER BEWARE

Sure, seafood is healthy—but not when it's breaded and fried. An appetizer portion of crab cakes can have more than 1,000 calories.

BEST BET

Start with a classic: shrimp cocktail. A serving has about a quarter of the calories of an order of crab cakes, but the protein makes it just as satisfying.

STEAKS

BUYER BEWARE

An average steakhouse ribeye (about 12 ounces) can set you back 1,000 calories and saddle you with more than two-days' worth of unhealthy saturated fat.

BEST BET

Filet mignon is fairly lean and prized for its tenderness. Because it's so expensive, portions tend to be smaller (around 7 ounces), and weigh in at about 500 calories.

SIDES

BUYER BEWARE

It may be a salad, but a side Caesar can be a high-cal order (all that cheese and creamy dressing!). A small portion can come in at more than 400 calories and a whopping 36 grams of fat.

BEST BET

Go for the grain. A side of rice pilaf, which soaks up all those savory steak juices, comes in at just over 200 calories—and less than 5 grams of fat.

DESSERTS

BUYER BEWARE

Just because it has a vegetable in it doesn't mean carrot cake is healthy. Thanks to lots of oil and cream cheese frosting, it can have nearly 1,400 calories a slice.

BEST BET

It may be hard to believe, but a single-portion molten chocolate cake—a whole one, just for you!—can have half the calories of a slice of carrot cake.

Where's the beef?

For 15 more fun and meaty recipes, visit **RachaelRayMag.com/steak**.

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index

MEAT

Steakhouse-Style New York Strip ● B

Easy Porchetta with Roasted Vegetables ● 35

Pork Chops with Shallot and Mustard Sauce ● 82

Agrodolce Greens & Bacon on Polenta ● 85

Pork Medallions with Fennel & Escarole Salad ● 86

Veal Meatballs with Crispy Sage & Spinach ● 89

Rib Roast with Roasted Garlic & Herbs 106

Sliced Steaks with Kale Caesar Salad ● ● 120

Moussaka-Style Shepherd's Pie ● ● 87

SAUCES

Healthy Béarnaise ● B

Slimmed-Down Steak Sauce ● B

Mom's Horseradish Sauce ● ● 109

Cake Cream ● ● 110

30 Holiday Cookie Hacks! 90

- Easy decorating tricks and tips
- One cookie cutter, five festive designs
- Awesome no-bake treats and lots more!

PASTAS

Winter Greens & Walnut Pesto with Whole-Wheat Spaghetti ● ● 83

Pappardelle in Chianti Sauce ● 84

Linguine with Crab ● 104

DRINKS

Grapefruit Sidecar ● ● 36

Blood Orange 75 ● ● 104

DESSERTS

Light Strawberry Cheesecake ● B

Chocolate-Hazelnut Skillet Cake ● ● 36

Pistachio, Apricot & Sesame Brittle ● ● 39

Olive Oil Cake ● ● 110

KEY ● Fast (30 min. or less) ● Freezer-friendly ● Vegetarian ● Gluten-free **B** Tear-out booklet

RACH'S BURGER of the MONTH

Sure, Thanksgiving is over, but turkey and cranberries are a delicious combo all year long!

Big Blue Turkey Burgers

MAKES 4

I use smoked blue cheese from Oscar's Smoke House *(oscarsadksmokehouse.com)* but any good-quality blue will do. Choose one that's not too wet—you want big crumbles mixed in with the meat.

- **2 cups fresh or frozen cranberries**
- **½ cup sugar**
- **1 lb. ground turkey**
- **3 scallions, finely chopped**
- **2 tbsp. Worcestershire sauce**
- **Salt and pepper**
- **½–¾ cup (2 to 3 oz.) big crumbles of blue cheese or smoked blue cheese**
- **1 tbsp. olive oil**
- **Bread-and-butter pickle slices, red leaf lettuce and thinly sliced red onion**
- **4 kaiser rolls, split and toasted**
- **Dill pickle–flavored potato chips**

➤ In a large saucepan, bring the cranberries, sugar and ½ cup water to a boil over high. Reduce the heat to medium and cook, stirring occasionally, until the cranberries pop and the sauce thickens, about 15 minutes. Cover the sauce to keep it warm while you make the burgers.

➤ In a medium bowl, combine the ground turkey, chopped scallions and Worcestershire sauce. Season with salt and pepper; gently mix in the blue cheese. Form into 4 large patties (thinner in the centers for even cooking).

➤ In a large nonstick or cast-iron skillet, heat the oil, one turn of the pan, over medium-high. Cook the patties, turning occasionally, until cooked through, about 10 minutes.

➤ Arrange the pickles, lettuce and onion on the bun bottoms. Top with the patties, slather with warm cranberry sauce and set the roll tops in place. Serve with the potato chips.

FOOD STYLING BY MICHELLE GATTON; PROP STYLING BY WENDY SCHELAH.

Photography by LUCAS ZAREBINSKI

SAUSAGE CORNBREAD STUFFING

INGREDIENTS:

1 16-oz. pkg. Jimmy Dean® Premium Pork Sausage (Sage or Regular)
2 cups celery, chopped
1 cup onion, finely chopped
4 cups cornbread, toasted & chopped
¼ cup fresh parsley, chopped
1 tsp. poultry seasoning
1 cup chicken broth
1 egg, lightly beaten
½ cup pecans, chopped (optional)

DIRECTIONS:

1. **PREHEAT** oven to 325°F. Cook sausage, celery and onion in large skillet over MEDIUM-HIGH heat 8–10 min. or until sausage is thoroughly cooked; drain. Spoon into large bowl.
2. **ADD** cornbread, parsley and seasoning; mix lightly. Add in broth, egg and mix until blended. Stir in pecans.
3. **SPOON** into lightly greased 2-quart casserole or soufflé dish; cover and bake 45 min. or until thoroughly heated, uncovering after 35 min.

PREP TIME: 20 min. **COOK TIME:** 45 min.
COOK'S TIP: To toast cornbread, bake at 400°F for 10 min.

SHARE YOUR FAVORITE SAUSAGE RECIPE, AND THE STORY BEHIND IT, USING **#JDFAMILYTABLE** AND YOU COULD BE FEATURED.

Shine On.™

JIMMYDEAN.COM/RECIPES

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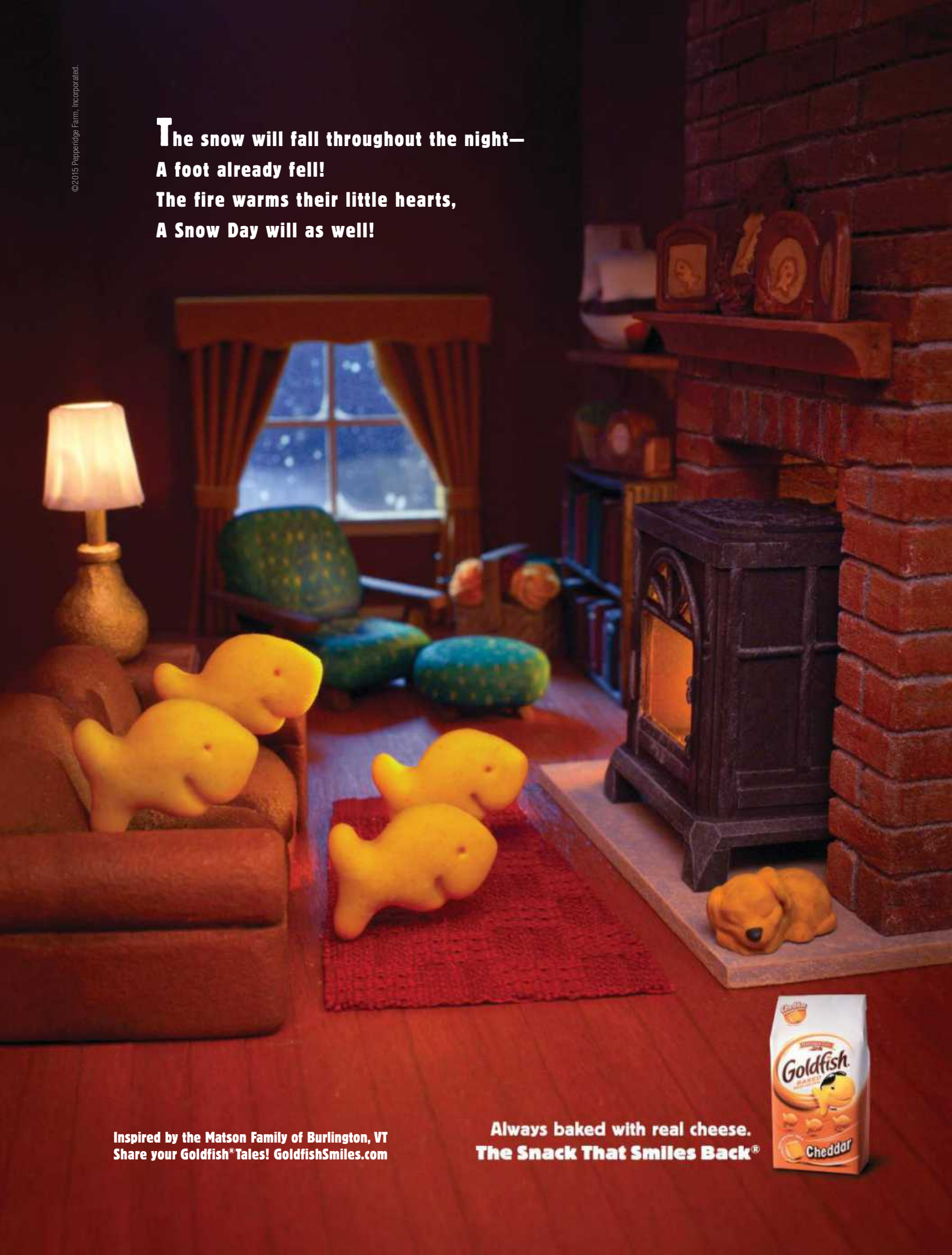

Merry and bright!

I'VE WRITTEN 21 BOOKS in the past 15 years and each one holds a special place in my heart. They're each a part of me the same way a child would be. But I have to say, my 22nd book, *Everyone Is Italian on Sunday*, is one big baby—and I think it's my favorite child. It's a true labor of love: When I delivered the manuscript, it was more than 700 pages, single-spaced! It's a scrapbook of my life as much as it is a book of recipes, and it's got a lot of dishes you might not expect from the likes of the 30-Minute Meal girl. Slow-cooked Sunday-style meals, braised meats, soups, stews, homemade pastas. In the ways that these meals bring us all together, they prove that everybody is an Italian on Sunday. Please don't miss our special sneak peek on page 100 for a menu of some of my favorite recipes: Linguine with Crab, Easy Rib Roast with Roasted Garlic and Herbs, Olive Oil Cake and more.

Another great reason to celebrate? It's the holidays! This month's 30-Minute Meals are designed to feed a crowd—perfect this time of year when family and friends seem to come and go for like, what, a month and a half?! Turn to page 80 for my go-tos. I especially love Italian-Style Rotisserie-Chicken Noodle Soup with Green Beans after a day of sledding or snowball fights, and the Moussaka-Style Shepherd's Pie. Yum!

You are gonna *love love love* our cookie hacks on page 90: no-bake cookies, easy frosting tricks, fun ways to dress up store-bought sweets. You don't need to be a master baker—or even a baker!—to whip up these treats.

For a special-occasion dinner you can really feel good about, tear out our Makeover Meal booklet to make a rich steakhouse feast for a fraction of the calories and fat. As I've always said, if your favorite date destination is a steakhouse, all the more reason to make dinner instead of a reservation. You save money and control the ingredients, but more importantly, it shows you really care.

If you have the travel bug around the holidays, eat your way around cities like New York, Chicago, New Orleans and more by visiting all the new food halls that are cropping up (page 24). Happy sampling, holiday travelers!

Remember: The ho ho happiest of Hanukkahs and Christmases are the ones that aren't perfect. Don't try to make your table look like the pictures in this or any other magazine. Enjoy each other's company and don't take yourself or your food too seriously.

Check ya in the New Year!

Love,

Rachael Ray

COOK THE BOOK To me, this is the most important book I've written. It represents decades of enjoying and working with food and the people I love most in this world. Inside, you'll find favorite meals and special recipes, including my sister Maria's favorite Italian desserts and my husband John's Italian ingredient–inspired cocktails. Get a special sneak peek on page 100!

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS BY KATHRYN8/ GETTYIMAGE.

Rach's most-wanted list!

Get a peek at the awesome gifts Rachael and her friends are excited to give (and maybe even receive—hint, hint!) this holiday season.

1. These **Marigny Triangles** are handcrafted from a variety of sturdy woods for the prettiest holiday cheese plates. Give one with your favorite cheese! *From $20, nolaboards.com*

PROP STYLING BY JILL EDWARDS.

Photography by PETER ARDITO

"This stuff makes your skin smooth and soft! I give it to all of my girlfriends."

—Michelle Martucci, payroll accountant for Rach's TV show

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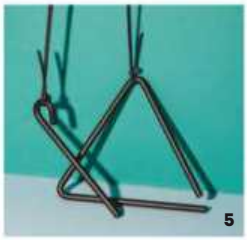
"I love giving classic gifts, and what's more nostalgic than a dinner-bell call to a family meal?"

—Jaclyn Colabraro, art director for Rach's TV show



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"I'll feel good about giving this to my coffee-loving friends because I know it does some good in the world!"

—Lisa Freedman, home and market editor, *Rachael Ray Every Day*

7

"It's always nice to take a couple of minutes to reflect and actually write a note to someone."

—Chad W. Carter, senior supervising producer for Rach's TV show

8

9

10

2. Exfoliating coffee is mixed with essential oils for a **Body Scrub** that gives you an indulgent spa experience at home. *From $15 for 7 oz., frankbody.com*

3. Slather the **Limited Edition Bourbon Barrel Aged Smoky** barbecue sauce on ribs and steak for a finger-licking-good meal. *$15 for 16 oz., lilliesq.com*

4. Rock on in style with the **Major II Headphones**, complete with a faux-leather head strap. *$119 each, marshallheadphones.com*

5. Nothing says "Come and get it!" like a **Chuckwagon Dinner Bell**. *$17, lodgemfg.com*

6. Chemex (known for pour-over brewing) and Toms (you've seen their cute canvas shoes) have teamed up to make this glass **Coffeemaker**. Each purchase gives two weeks of water to someone in need. *$50, toms.com*

7. Transport hot or cold dishes in the **Rachael Ray Casseroval Thermal Carrier**, designed to enclose your favorite baking dish, no matter the shape. *$20, rachaelraystore.com*

8. Designed by a former staffer at Rach's show, metallic **Brooklyn Bridge Skyline Thank You Cards** are just the way to show how grateful you are. *$15 for six, lovejac.com*

9. Each **Macaron Making Kit** from the famed Dana's Bakery comes with the essentials you need—like piping bags and a tip—to make a batch of chocolaty treats at home. *$24, danasbakery.com*

10. Made with sterling silver and Swarovski crystals, the **Love You to Death Skull Earrings** are a great pick for a fiesty femme fatale. *$40, chamilia.com*

11. Enjoy a proper drink in the air with **Carry On Cocktail Kits.** Add their TSA-approved amounts of mixers, bitters and the like to a bottle of booze from the flight attendant. *$24 each, carryoncocktailkit.com*

12. The zip-top **Small Acts Change the World Carry All** sends a nice message while doing practical work. *$24, superlovetees.com*

11

"You can shop and spread the love at the same time with this great bag."

—Jeanette Donnarumma, culinary producer for Rach's TV show

12

advertisement

Authentically ITALIAN Mangia!

Bring the distinct flavors of Italy to your kitchen with this delicious recipe that serves up passion, authenticity and quality in every bite.

Tagliatelle con Pesto e Prosciutto

MAKES 4 SERVINGS

- 2 tablespoons pine nuts
- 2 cups tightly packed fresh basil
- 1/3 cup +1 tablespoon Italian extra virgin olive oil
- 1 garlic clove
- 1/4 cup freshly grated Grana Padano PDO cheese
- 1 teaspoon Italian sea salt
- 5 thin slices imported Italian prosciutto, about 1 ounce, cut into 1/4-inch strips
- 1 pound authentic Italian tagliatelle pasta
- 1/3 cup oil packed Italian sun-dried tomato halves, drained and chopped

1. Heat a small skillet over medium and add the pine nuts. Cook, shaking the pan occasionally, until the nuts are aromatic and golden, 5-6 minutes. Transfer to a bowl and let cool 5 minutes.

2. Combine the cooled pine nuts, basil, 1/3 cup of the oil and garlic in a blender; process until a thick paste forms, stopping and scraping down the sides as needed. Add the Grana Padano and salt; process until smooth and transfer to a small bowl.

3. Heat the remaining 1 tablespoon of oil in a small skillet over medium. Add 1/3 of the prosciutto and cook, turning once or twice, until it is slightly browned, about 1 1/2-2 minutes. Transfer to a plate lined with paper towel: the prosciutto will crisp as it cools. Repeat with the remaining prosciutto in 2 batches.

4. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the pasta, return to a boil, and cook according to package directions; drain. Transfer the pasta to a bowl and add the pesto and sun-dried tomatoes; toss well to coat. Divide the pasta among 4 plates and garnish each with the prosciutto.

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USA Pears

word of mouth

MICHAEL CHERNOW PHOTO COURTESY FYI; INSTAGRAM PHOTOS (FROM TOP) COURTESY MICHAEL CHERNOW (2) AND ALEXA MEHRABAN.

Q+A with a #foodporn fanatic

Go behind the scenes of some of the nation's most hashtagged dishes with the FYI network's new show *Food Porn*, hosted by famed foodie and co-owner of NYC's Meatball Shop Michael Chernow. BY DAVID FARLEY

Q: What are some of the craziest dishes you've found with the hashtag?
A: I've got to say the Creole Gator [smoked alligator sausage, popcorn crawfish, slaw, scallions and rémoulade on a bun, *top right*] at Austin's Frank was pretty out of control. And the Smorgasbird [fried chicken, grilled pineapple, lettuce, tomato, special sauce and barbecue sauce, plus a melty mix of fries, barbecue chicken, smoked bacon, aged cheddar, sour cream and pickled peppers on brioche, *bottom right*] at NYC's Blue Ribbon Fried Chicken was the biggest burger I've ever seen.

Q: Why have we become so obsessed with food porn?
A: You know when you ride a crazy roller coaster and get a shirt that says, "I survived the Cyclone?" This is the foodie equivalent. We want to show we were here, and we conquered this crazy dish.

Q: Any major #foodporn fails you've seen?
A: Two things that never look good when you photograph them, no matter how delicious they are: egg drop soup and oatmeal.

Catch these #foodporn stars on the show

Austin's Frank, aka @hotdogscoldbeer, fills its #creolegator with alligator sausage.

The #cincoleches at @havanaharrys is a dulce de leche lover's dream cake.

@blueribbonfc's double-decker #smorgasbird

NAMA-STAY FOR A DRINK!

Making happy hour happier, breweries, wineries and distilleries are adding yoga to the mix. So you can now pair, say, your Hatha practice with a pint of porter at the **Fargo Brewing Company's Yoga on Tap** event *(fargobrewing.com)*. Or your Yin yoga with BloodyMarys at the **Backwards Distilling Company's Happy Hour Yoga** in Mills, WY *(backwardsdistilling.com)*. Prefer sparkling cocktails? Try 'em with Power Flow yoga at **Bluewater Organic Distilling's YogaMosa** class in Everett, WA *(bluewaterdistilling.com)*. You can even Vinyasa among the vines! Hit **Yoga in the Vineyard** at the **Stone Tower Winery** in Leesburg, VA, and finish with a glass of red *(stonetowerwinery.com)*. —ALEXANDRA PECCI

PHOTO COURTESY THE EMBASSY ROW HOTEL.

GIVE BACK

Do-good, taste-good trips

You already know that many restaurants give to charity. Now, just in time for your winter break, hotels and tour operators are serving up delicious ways to give back, too. BY ANJA MUTIC

GIVE A LITTLE

Check into the Radisson Blu hotel at Minnesota's famed Mall of America, and order the White Chocolate Banana Cream Pie at the resident FireLake Grill House & Cocktail Bar. During the holiday season, proceeds will go to **Second Harvest Heartland**, a local food bank *(radissonblu.com/hotel-mall-of-america; 2harvest.org)*. Meanwhile, for every special of the day sold at Station Kitchen & Cocktails in the Washington, DC, Embassy Row Hotel, 25 cents goes to **So Others Might Eat**, an organization that helps feed the hungry *(destinationhotels.com/embassy-row-hotel; some.org)*. Staying at San Diego's iconic Paradise Point Resort & Spa? Try the Tidal restaurant's Fenberry Collins, a gin, cranberry, spice and lime seasonal specialty. For each drink, Tidal will donate $1 to the **Center for Community Solutions**, an agency that combats domestic and sexual violence *(paradisepoint.com; ccssd.org)*.

GO DEEPER

G Adventures, which offers hundreds of budget-friendly trips worldwide, has been opening restaurants that give back through its **Planeterra Foundation**. One of the best-selling Peru itineraries, for example, takes you to the Parwa community restaurant, where every Andes-to-table treat you try benefits not just the people who work there, but also local farmers who get funding to supply produce and women's cooperatives contracted to blend the restaurant's tea *(gadventures.com; planeterra.org)*.

DIG ALL THE WAY IN

Go Eat Give vacations blend food tours, cooking classes and volunteer work into one trip. In India, for example, you may **volunteer at a women's shelter** in the morning, enjoy the fruits of a Punjabi cooking class for lunch, and have dinner in a local home *(goeatgive.com)*.

Illustration by BEN WISEMAN

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PANOS brands

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IF YOU HAVEN'T CAUGHT RACH'S HUSBAND ON STAGE, catch him online! John's band, The Cringe, was recently part of Mötley Crüe the Final Tour, and the YouTube clips are awesome. "Touring with two rock legends, Mötley Crüe and Alice Cooper, has been a dream," John says. "They bring the rock night after night. And despite their hard-partying reputation, the backstage is populated with wives, dogs and kids."

Thanks a latke, General Tso!

Chinese food on Christmas? Yup, it's a thing for American Jews, as Chinese restaurants are among the few open that day. And now, chefs are taking the tradition to the next level with cool cultural mashups. BY LEAH KOENIG

Manhattan Iconic smoked-fish outpost Russ & Daughters Cafe is teaming up with hot spot Mission Chinese Food. Though the menu has yet to be revealed, last year's sold-out debut included kung pao pastrami and congee topped with trout roe and scallions, plus fortune cookies stuffed with pearls of Yiddish wisdom. *russanddaughterscafe.com*

Boston area Inspired by the Chinese Christmas dinners of his youth, chef Michael Leviton of Lumière is serving up the likes of chow fun and chicken consommé with ginger and ginseng. For good measure, he's also offering latkes topped with house-smoked bluefish. *lumiererestaurant.com*

Philadelphia Israel native and chef Michael Solomonov serves up dinner and a movie on Christmas at Philly fave Zahav. On the screen? Still a secret! On the plate? Thai treats. *zahavrestaurant.com*

New Orleans Chef Alon Shaya is bringing a new tradition to New Orleans. He's slinging 5-spice barbecue brisket with pickled cabbage and tahini at his modern Israeli restaurant, Shaya. *shayarestaurant.com*

San Francisco A lineup of corned beef challah bao, potato-scallion latkes and sweet-and-sour schmaltz-glazed chicken wings may well make Christmas the busiest day of the year at San Francisco's Wise Sons Jewish Delicatessen. *wisesonsdeli.com*

New York City The über-hip delicatessen Mile End is celebrating with Chinese dishes both expected (Peking duck, egg drop soup) and remixed (smoked-meat fried rice). *mileenddeli.com*

FACTOIDS YULE LOVE!

According to Google, ham takes 30 out of 50 states in the category of most-searched holiday entrée. A notable outlier? New Mexico, where brisket reigns supreme.

The elderflower-flavored St-Germain cocktail is the most-searched holiday drink. But Tennesseans go their own way... with the Slippery Nipple.

Gingerbread and no-bake cookies are tied for most-searched cookies. South Dakota, however, would rather have Oreo Cookie Balls—and Massachusetts, Italian cookies.

—LAMBETH HOCHWALD

JOHN CUSIMANO PHOTO BY RACHAEL RAY; FORTUNE COOKIE BY PETER ARDITO; HAM BY ZOONAR GMBH/ALAMY; COCKTAIL COURTESY BARNONE.COM; GINGERBREAD HOUSE BY RUTHBLACK/ISTOCK.

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The new grub hubs

With killer kiosks, rocking restaurants and booming bars, food halls are equal parts flavor and fun. And these four dish out everyday amazingness as well as heavenly holiday treats. BY LANEE LEE

City Kitchen

New York City

Overlooking Times Square from the second floor of the Row NYC hotel, **City Kitchen** *(above)* serves up views of the famed frenzy below, plus treats from Luke's Lobster, Kuro Obi Ramen and six other cult faves. Big bonus for the Big Apple: You can get a great meal here for $20! *citykitchen.rownyc.com*

Everyday amazingness

Make Elvis smile upon you and try the Whitmans PB&B—a beef short-rib burger topped with organic peanut butter and applewood-smoked bacon. Chase that with Dough's cocoa nib–spiked passion fruit doughnut.

Holiday treats

Get into the fiesta spirit with the Taco Navideño at Gabriela's Taqueria, where beef-pork picadillo and roasted poblano pepper party with walnut cream sauce and pomegranate seeds on fresh tortillas *(left)*. The Wooly's Gingerbread Cookie Shaved Snow is part winter wonderland, part tropics, with the texture of freshly fallen snow, and the richness typical of Taiwanese-style shaved ice.

St. Roch Market

New Orleans

Newly overhauled, the old-timey **St. Roch Market** (opened in 1875; closed when Katrina came through) is NOLA all the way—from the grand columns in the central hall to the live jazz on weekends. Still, among the 13 vendors, you'll find not just traditional Southern fare, but everything from Korean-creole (Koreole!) to organic nut milks. *strochmarket.com*

Everyday amazingness

King Creole's Crawfish Poutine, a Louisiana spin on Canada's famed gravy-and-cheese-topped fries, is an excellent beginning, complete with deep-fried new potatoes, pepper jack cheese and crawfish étouffée. If you can handle more melted cheese, move on to Dirty Dishes for the Munch Crepe—with smoked gouda mac-and-cheese and barbecue pulled pork. Or have dessert there instead, in the form of a crepe with cheesecake filling, strawberries and graham cracker crumbles *(left)*.

Holiday treats

Toast with Mayhaw Bar's Adult Holiday Punch, a take on NOLA's famed milk punch, made with Old New Orleans Rum, milk, vanilla simple syrup and a dusting of nutmeg. Then soak up the booze with the Sweet Spot's chocolate cake with pepperment buttercream, chocolate ganache and crushed peppermints.

Fourth Street Market

Santa Ana, CA

Fifteen minutes from Disneyland sits **Fourth Street Market**, where you should go before or after you visit Mickey. Actually,

CITY KITCHEN PHOTO COURTESY MICHAEL KLEINBERG FOR CITY KITCHEN AT ROW NYC; TACO COURTESY GABRIELA'S RESTAURANT AND TEQUILA BAR; ST. ROCH CREPE COURTESY RUSH JAGOE; ICE CREAM COURTESY CHUNK-N-CHIP.

go even if you're not visiting him. The offerings from the market's 16 vendors are that good. And once you've had your fill of, say, Vietnamese chimichurri tacos, work 'em off at the Ping Pong tables in the garden—also home to concerts, screenings and open-mic nights. *4thstreetmarket.com*

Everyday amazingness
Waffle Inc.'s Red Mole, a mole-infused waffle topped with chicken, cotija cheese and more mole, makes for a luscious lunch. For dessert, hit Chunk-n-Chip, where the ice cream flavors change weekly, but include the likes of organic sweet corn with marbled apricot and fresh jalapeño or German chocolate cake *(above)*.

Holiday treats
Score snowman-shaped Christmas Mallow Pops at Torch S'mores. Next up? Radical Botanicals' Cacao-Mint Christmas Cream Soda—organic raw cacao, Madagascar vanilla, peppermint essential oil and carbonated alkaline water, served over shaved ice with fresh peppermint and an optional hug. In fact, hugs are offered—and often accepted—with any order at this seriously So-Cal stand.

Latinicity

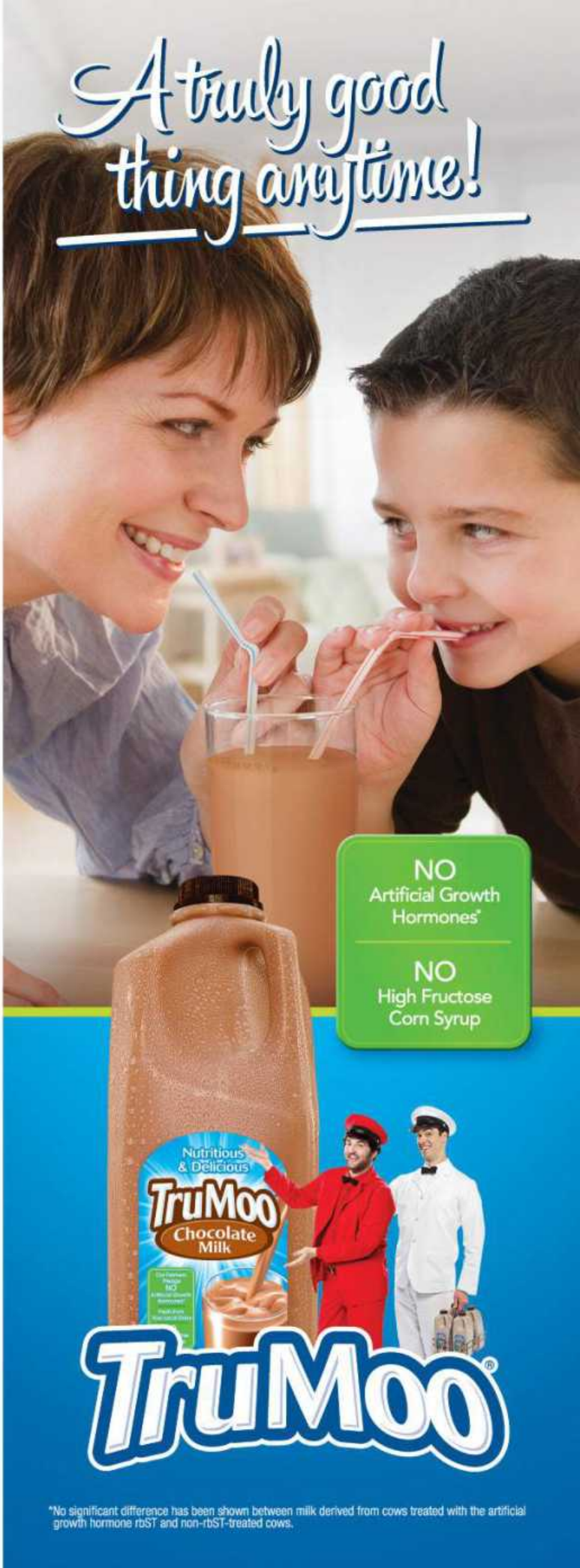
Chicago

Meant to re-create the vibe of Spain's open food markets, chef Richard Sandoval's **Latinicity** is the best kind of sensory overload. Think food trolleys rolling across a Spanish tile floor, whiffs of Mexican, Cuban, Argentine and Portuguese dishes drifting from stands and Latin music playing throughout. There's also a tapas restaurant, café, wine bar and cooking classes. *latinicity.com*

Everyday amazingness
Go for Tortas & Cocas's Cubano Torta—with ham, carnitas, pickles, Swiss cheese and habanero mustard—or the Mechefe Taqueria's slow-braised Shortrib Barbacoa.

Holiday treats
Sold at the market's retail area, King's Cake is a crown-shaped confection of sweet bread, dried fruit, nuts and honey with a baked-in baby Jesus who promises good luck to whoever finds him. For something more secular, head to Latinicity's bar for Ponche Navideño *(above)*, a warm Mexican holiday blend of stewed apples, dried fruit, cinnamon and tequila.

DRINK COURTESY LATINICITY.



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Mini Apple Pies

Prep: 25 mins | Cook: 35 mins
Servings: 18 (*1 mini tart each*)

INGREDIENTS

PAM® Original cooking spray
½ cup firmly packed brown sugar, divided
⅓ cup sliced almonds
¼ cup all-purpose flour
3 tablespoons cold Parkay® Original-stick
1 pkg (15 oz each) refrigerated pie crusts
1 ⅓ pounds apples (such as Braeburn), cored, chopped
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
½ teaspoon vanilla extract
Reddi-wip® Original Dairy Whipped Topping

DIRECTIONS

1. Stir together 6 tablespoons brown sugar, almonds and flour in small bowl. Cut in Parkay® with pastry blender until mixture resembles coarse crumbs; refrigerate until ready to use.
2. Preheat oven to 375°F. Spray 18 medium nonstick muffin cups with PAM® cooking spray. Roll each pie crust into a 13-inch circle on floured work surface. Trim and discard edges to make two 10 ½-inch square crusts. Cut each crust into 9 square pieces. Carefully press pieces into muffin cups; set aside.
3. Combine apples, remaining 2 tablespoons brown sugar, cinnamon and vanilla in large bowl. Spoon ¼ cup apple mixture into each crust-lined muffin cup.
4. Bake 20 minutes. Top each with crumble mixture; bake 8 to 10 minutes more or until crumble browns. Cool in pan 5 minutes; carefully remove from muffin cups. Top each with Reddi-wip® just before serving.

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IN SEASON

Pomegranate power!

SIMPLY SMASHING

Forget trying to open a pomegranate neatly—on New Year's Eve in Greece, the mess is the point! In keeping with tradition, just before midnight a pomegranate gets whacked in the doorway of the family home. The more seeds that spill, the greater the luck for the coming year. (Except maybe for the person who has to clean up.)

FOOD STYLING BY MICHELLE GATTON

By REBECCA FLINT MARX Photography by DANNY KIM

Pom reader

Pomegranates are at their peak during the holidays. Here's how to buy and cook 'em!

SHOP Most pomegranates sold in the U.S. are the Wonderful variety, which can be medium to deep red. Either way, look for firm, heavy fruit.

STORE You can keep them on the counter for up to one month, or in the fridge for up to two.

COOK Bottled juice and crunchy arils can go sweet or savory:

Pom-roasted chicken Mix 1 cup pomegranate juice with 1 tbsp. honey and 1 grated garlic clove. Pour over a chicken in a roasting pan. Season; roast at 400°, basting occasionally, until cooked through, about 1 hour.

Red and green couscous Stir pomegranate arils, pistachios, orange zest and chopped parsley into cooked couscous.

Fruity bark Spread a thin layer of melted chocolate on parchment. Sprinkle with pomegranate arils, coconut flakes and sea salt. Let cool.

SEEDY BUSINESS

To free the arils (aka seeds), put the halved fruit in a bowl of water and rub the seeds to release them, breaking up the fruit as you go. Remove any pith.

» GO WITH YOUR GUT

Everyone is buzzing about probiotics, the digestion-friendly gut bacteria, but there's a tastier way to help your tummy than popping a supplement. In a recent study, taking pomegranate extract equal to **a cup of juice a day for a month boosted good bacteria** for 70 percent of people, thanks to pomegranate-specific compounds called ellagitannins. Talk about inner beauty!

HOW SWEET!

Listen up, cocktail fans: Real grenadine is made from pomegranate juice, not corn syrup and food color—and it's super easy to make. Just simmer 2 cups pomegranate juice and 1 cup sugar until reduced by half. Shirley Temples all around!

30 billion

The number of pomegranates sliced in the five-year history of Fruit Ninja, a wildly popular produce-slashing mobile game. One of the most valuable fruits in the game, they are worth up to 60 points (based on how many slashes a player makes), though the most anyone has gotten is 55. Challenge accepted!

CHICKEN AND SHIRLEY TEMPLE PHOTOS BY PETER ARDITO; FOOD STYLING BY MICHELLE GATTON; FRUIT NINJA COURTESY HALFBRICK STUDIOS, AUSTRALIA.

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15 FAST IDEAS

1. Easy Porchetta with Roasted Vegetables

1 tbsp. orange zest • 1 tbsp. chopped sage • 1 clove garlic, grated • 1 tsp. chopped rosemary • 1 pork tenderloin (1 lb.), butterflied • 3 tbsp. olive oil • 1 lb. parsnips—peeled, quartered and cut into 2-inch pieces • 1 lb. carrots—peeled, quartered and cut into 2-inch pieces ↠

Sprinkle first 4 ingredients onto cut side of pork; season, roll and tie. In large skillet, heat oil over medium-high. Add pork; cook until browned all over, about 6 minutes. Add vegetables. Roast at 400° until pork is cooked through and veggies are tender, about 15 minutes. Serves 4.

BUTTERFLY AND TIE ROASTS LIKE A PRO!
PAGE 115

How handy!

Instead of an oven mitt, slip a cute mitten over the hot handle for skillet-to-table serving.

FOOD STYLING BY HEATHER MELDRUM; PROP STYLING BY PAOLA ANDREA.

Recipes by SUE LI Photography by SARAH ANNE WARD

Quick weeknight dinner!

2. Mediterranean Chicken Salad

4 boneless, skin-on chicken thighs, pounded ¼ inch thick • 1 tbsp. olive oil • 1 can (15 to 16 oz.) chickpeas, rinsed • ½ cup green olives, smashed and pitted • 1 bunch arugula • 2½ tbsp. fresh lemon juice → Season chicken. In skillet, heat oil over medium. Add chicken, skin side down; cook, turning once, until cooked through, about 15 minutes. Transfer to plate. In same skillet, cook chickpeas and olives over medium, 5 minutes; season. Toss with arugula and juice. Serves 4.

Smart shakeup

No cocktail shaker? A large jar with a lid works just as well.

3. Grapefruit Sidecar

1 tbsp. grapefruit zest plus 1 cup fresh juice • 2 tbsp. sugar • 5 halved grapefruit slices • 4 oz. cognac • 3 oz. orange liqueur • 3 cups ice → On plate, mix zest and sugar. Rub 1 grapefruit slice around rims of 4 coupe glasses; dip rims in sugar to coat. In large shaker, combine grapefruit juice, cognac, orange liqueur and ice. Shake; strain into glasses. Garnish with remaining grapefruit slices. Makes 4.

Easy breezy dessert!

4. Chocolate-Hazelnut Skillet Cake

1 tbsp. butter • ½ cup sugar • ¾ cup whole milk • ⅓ cup flour • 2 large eggs • 2 tbsp. cocoa powder • ¼ cup toasted hazelnuts, chopped • whipped cream → Coat 10-inch ovenproof skillet with butter; sprinkle with 1 tbsp. sugar to coat. In bowl, whisk remaining sugar and next 4 ingredients until smooth. Pour into skillet; top with hazelnuts. Bake at 375° until puffed, 15 to 18 minutes. Serve with whipped cream. Serves 6.

Pretty enough for a party!

5. Creamy Cauliflower Soup with Paprika Oil

1 tsp. paprika • 4 tbsp. vegetable oil • 1½ lbs. cauliflower, chopped • ½ lb. russet potato, peeled and chopped • 1 onion, sliced • 1 pear, chopped • 1 tsp. ground coriander • 4 cups chicken stock • cilantro leaves → In skillet, cook paprika in 1 tbsp. oil over low, 2 minutes. In pot, cook next 5 ingredients in 3 tbsp. oil over medium, 10 minutes. Add stock; boil until tender, 10 minutes. Puree; season. Top with paprika oil and cilantro. Serves 4.

Little angels.

Little devils.

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Sweet gift!

Pack the brittle in paper-lined tins and give as holiday treats!

6. Pistachio, Apricot & Sesame Brittle

Cooking spray • 1 cup sugar • ½ cup light corn syrup • 1 tbsp. butter • 1 tsp. baking soda • ½ cup chopped pistachios • ⅓ cup chopped dried apricots • 1 tbsp. sesame seeds → Coat baking sheet with spray. In saucepan, cook sugar, syrup and a pinch of salt over medium, stirring occasionally, until amber, 10 to 13 minutes. Carefully stir in butter and baking soda (mixture bubbles up!); pour onto baking sheet. Top with remaining ingredients; cool and break into pieces. Serves 8.

Add bread and you've got brunch!

7. Sunnyside Eggs with Cheesy Winter Greens

3 tbsp. olive oil • ¾ lb. collard greens, chopped • ¾ lb. mustard greens, chopped • ½ cup heavy cream • 1 shallot, sliced • ½ cup grated Parmesan • 6 eggs • ¼ tsp. crushed red pepper → In large skillet, heat oil over medium. Cook greens, cream and shallot, 5 minutes. Stir in cheese; season. Crack eggs over greens; cover and cook over low until whites set, about 10 minutes. Sprinkle with crushed red pepper; season. Serves 6.

Grilled cheese gone healthy

8. Very Veggie Grilled Cheese Sandwiches

2 cups grated cheddar • 2 carrots, grated • 5 oz. baby kale • ¼ cup Kalamata olives, chopped • ¼ small red onion, sliced • 3 tbsp. chopped dill • 1 tbsp. cider vinegar • 8 slices sourdough • 2 tbsp. olive oil → In bowl, combine first 7 ingredients; season. Divide among 4 bread slices; top with remaining slices. In skillet, heat oil over medium. Toast sammies, pressing with spatula, until cheese melts, 3 minutes per side. Makes 4.

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9. Double-Potato Latkes

1½ lbs. Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled and grated • ½ lb. sweet potato, peeled and grated • 1 onion, finely chopped (1 cup) • 1 egg, beaten • ¼ cup cornstarch • 1 cup olive oil → In bowl, toss first 5 ingredients; season. In skillet, heat oil over medium. In batches, cook ¼ cupfuls of batter, turning once, until golden, 10 minutes. Makes about 20.

DIY latke bar

Serve the latkes with a ton of toppings, like lox, dill, onions and sour cream.

Snack-size sub

10. Mini Muffulettas

¼ cup chopped jarred roasted red peppers • 1 rib celery • 1 shallot • 2 tbsp. olive oil • 2 tbsp. red wine vinegar • 1 tbsp. capers • 8 slices soppressata • 8 slices mortadella • 8 slices provolone • 8 slider buns → In food processor, chop first 6 ingredients to form coarse paste; season. Divide meats, cheese and pepper spread among buns. Makes 8.

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on your family's **RICH & CREAMY RECIPES**

MODERN RECIPE BOX

For a modern twist on the classic recipe card, try making your own recipe video that can be easily shared with family & friends online and saved for future generations. To make Melissa's traditional southwestern green chile casserole for your family, go to **Youtube.com/Lactaid**.

PERSONAL TASTE

Every generation has their own spin on a family dish. So go ahead, adjust ingredients for your palate. Using different chiles can create different flavors: Hatch chiles will give you more heat, while Anaheim's are milder.

FULL ENJOYMENT

Don't wait for a special occasion to enjoy your family's favorite creamy dishes. If you're sensitive to dairy due to lactose, you can still enjoy these recipes any time, by using **LACTAID**® Milk. It's 100% real milk, just without the lactose. So it won't cause discomfort. Go ahead – have a taste of home anytime!

Melissa d'Arabian
LACTAID® Spokesperson
with Alejandra

A KITCHEN IS THE HEART OF THE HOME, AND GREAT COMPANY HELPS IT BEAT. SALUD!

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11
12
15
easiest-ever holiday party!

11. Chicken Meatballs with Curried Dipping Sauce

½ cup mayonnaise • 1 tbsp. fresh lemon juice • ½ tsp. curry powder • ½ tsp. turmeric • 1 lb. ground chicken • 4 scallions, chopped • 2 tbsp. chopped parsley • 1 Serrano chile, seeded and minced • 1 tbsp. breadcrumbs • 1 tsp. grated ginger • cooking spray → In bowl, whisk first 4 ingredients; season. In another bowl, combine next 6 ingredients; season and form into 24 balls. On baking sheet coated with cooking spray, broil meatballs until cooked through, 10 minutes. Serve with sauce. Makes 24.

12. Olive-Almond Puff Pastry Pinwheels

1 cup pitted green olives • ½ cup chopped parsley • ¼ cup roasted unsalted almonds • 3 tbsp. olive oil • 1 sheet (about 8 oz.) frozen puff pastry, thawed and rolled into 12-inch square → In food processor, finely chop first 4 ingredients. Spread mixture onto pastry. Roll into cylinder; slice into 40 rounds. Bake at 400° until golden, tenting with foil if browning too quickly, about 20 minutes. Serves 8.

13. Fried Plantains with Avocado Sauce

4 cups cilantro leaves • 2 avocados—peeled, pitted and chopped • ¼ cup fresh lime juice • 2 cloves garlic • 1 cup canola oil • 4 green plantains, peeled and sliced into 1-inch rounds → In food processor, puree first 4 ingredients; season. In skillet, heat oil over medium-high. Working in batches, fry plantains, turning once, until starting to brown, 4 minutes. Transfer to work surface. Using meat mallet, flatten plantains to ¼ inch. Fry again until crispy and browned, 3 minutes; season. Serves 8.

14. Apple & Crab Canapés

2 small Granny Smith apples • 16 oz. lump crabmeat • ¼ cup fresh lime juice • ¼ cup sour cream • 2 tbsp. chopped tarragon • 2 small shallots, minced • 2 tbsp. chopped chives → Slice each apple vertically into 8 thin rounds, avoiding the cores. In bowl, combine next 5 ingredients; season. Spoon onto slices; top with chives. Serve immediately. Makes 16.

15. Baked Cheese Plate

3 sheets frozen phyllo (8 by 14 inches), thawed • 1 tbsp. butter, melted • 1 wheel (6 oz.) bucheron or Brie • 1 sprig thyme • 1 tbsp. honey • candied walnuts, grapes, crackers → Lightly brush each phyllo sheet with butter; stack the phyllo on baking sheet. Place cheese in center; top with thyme. Fold up phyllo to mostly cover cheese, pinching phyllo together where it overlaps. Brush top of phyllo with remaining butter. Bake at 400° until golden, about 15 minutes. Transfer to platter; drizzle with honey. Serve with nuts, grapes and crackers. Serves 6 to 8.

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FLAVOR WHEEL

6 spins on party nuts!

LET'S GET NUTTY! On a foil-lined baking sheet, mix 1 cup roasted mixed nuts with the glaze ingredients below; bake at 400° for 6 to 8 minutes. Remove from oven, season and toss with the garnish ingredients. Let cool.

BBQ Crunch

Glaze: 1 tbsp. barbecue sauce, 1 tbsp. light corn syrup, ¼ tsp. smoked paprika
Garnish: ¼ cup crumbled barbecue potato chips

Orange-Clove

Glaze: 1 tbsp. thawed orange juice concentrate, 2 tsp. sugar, ⅛ tsp. ground cloves
Garnish: 1 tsp. orange zest

Lemon & Herbs

Glaze: 1 tbsp. honey, 1 tbsp. light corn syrup, 2 tsp. chopped rosemary, 2 tsp. chopped thyme
Garnish: 1 tsp. lemon zest

Wasabi-Sesame

Glaze: 1 tbsp. hoisin, 1 tbsp. light corn syrup
Garnish: ¼ cup crushed wasabi peas, 1 tsp. toasted sesame seeds

Sugar & Spice

Glaze: 1 tbsp. sugar, 1 tbsp. water, ¼ tsp. ground cinnamon, ¼ tsp. ground cumin
Garnish: ¼ cup toasted pepitas

Maple-Bacon

Glaze: 2 tbsp. pure maple syrup, ½ tsp. cayenne
Garnish: ¼ cup coarsely crumbled cooked crispy bacon

FOOD STYLING BY VICTORIA GRANOF.

By CHARLES GRAYAUSKIE Photography by PLAMEN PETKOV

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A-FRAME

Make the house by cutting two store-bought pound cakes into two right-angle triangles and pushing the pieces together. Cut a chimney from the excess, attach with a toothpick and frost.

The trees are ice cream cones covered in green frosting.

Use a rolling pin to flatten fruit chews. Cut out windows and a door, and stick into frosting.

Stick shingles made of pastel candy disks right into the frosting. Sprinkles create a walkway, and a dusting of confectioners' sugar completes the snowy look.

LIFE OF THE PARTY

Build, eat, repeat!

Forget traditional gingerbread: This year, make your neighbors jealous with a custom holiday house built from unexpected ingredients.

By SUSAN VAJARANANT Photography by LEVI BROWN

FOOD STYLING BY BRETT KURZWEIL; PROP STYLING BY SARAH GUIDO-LAAKSO.

MID-CENTURY MODERN

Use a combination of chocolate bars (dark, milk, white and cookie-filled) to mix up the look.

All it takes to hold this house together: a little bit of melted chocolate heated in the microwave. A handful of shredded coconut stands in for snow.

The door knob is an M&M's Mini and the windows are blue fruit chews attached with melted chocolate.

Make a tree with trimmed pretzel sticks held together with melted chocolate. Stick it into an upside-down mini peanut butter cup.

Home pride

Show off *your* edible holiday house on Instagram. Tag your pics with #RRMagFan: We'll be regramming the best ones all month long!

dark chocolate walnut raspberry cookies
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RUSTIC LOG CABIN

Place the pepperoni shingles last and encourage guests to eat up quickly: If this house sits out for too long, the shingles can get a little greasy.

Cheese and crackers are so much more fun in house form! The mortar between the pretzels and crackers is spreadable cheese.

It's snowing grated Parmesan cheese!

The mozzarella-ball snowman has peppercorn eyes, a carrot-and-olive hat and a roasted-red-pepper scarf.

Building supplies

Construct your sweet or savory dream home using any of these materials.

Walls

- Chocolate bars
- Graham crackers
- Granola bars
- Matzos
- Pound cake
- Pretzel rods
- Rice crackers
- Sugar wafer cookies
- Waffles

Mortar

- Melted chocolate chips or caramel
- Spreadable cheese
- Store-bought frosting

Shingles

- Banana chips
- Cereal (like Cheerios, Shredded Wheat or Cinnamon Toast Crunch)
- Mini vanilla wafer cookies
- Nonpareils
- Pastel candy discs (such as Necco wafers)
- Pepperoni
- Potato chips
- Sliced almonds

Doors

- Chocolate bar pieces
- Cocktail rye bread
- Crackers (like saltines or Club crackers)
- Fruit leather
- Licorice bites
- Rectangular cookies

Windows

- Flour tortillas
- Fruit chews (like Starburst and Airheads), rolled and cut
- Licorice strings
- Round hard candy (such as Life Savers or starlight mints)
- Square cheese crackers (like Cheez-It)
- Square pretzels
- Sticks of gum, trimmed
- Taffy, rolled out and cut

Snow

- Confectioners' sugar
- Grated Parmesan cheese
- Shredded coconut
- Sugar cookie crumbs
- White sanding sugar
- White sprinkles

Trees

- Frosted upside-down ice cream cones
- Skinny pretzel sticks
- Stacked gum drops

Snowmen

- Marshmallows
- Mini mozzarella balls
- Mini popcorn balls
- Powdered-sugar doughnut holes

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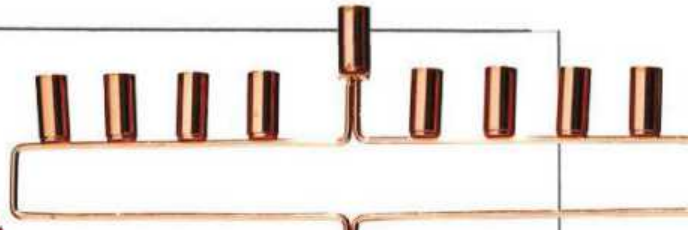
The totally honest, slightly snarky, Rachael Ray Every Day holiday gift guide. Guaranteed to please the person on your list who...

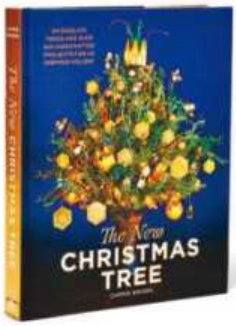
By LISA FREEDMAN Photography by DANNY KIM

...starts decorating for the holidays before Daylight Saving ends.

Maybe a **Superhero Nutcracker** can save the day and keep family members on their best behavior? *$40, cb2.com*



Pair this **Copper Cork Menorah** with a nice bottle of pinot—and some gelt. *$18, modern tribe.com*



Ornaments, tree toppers and more! ***The New Christmas Tree*** craft book packs enough holiday-themed decorating ideas to last longer than that 12 days of Christmas song. *$30, workman.com*

This cotton **Skandium Trees Runner** is just the thing for the person who gets a live Douglas fir for every room. *$45, shiraleah.com*

Not only does this **Merry Charger** juice up an iPhone 5, it also lights up like a string of holiday lights. *$18, dcigift.com*

Rose-gold **Reindeer Place Card Holders** are even cuter than Rudolph. *$15 for four, papersource.com*

No need to worry about small, medium, large: The **Holiday Sweater Board** is one-size-fits-all. *From $45, aheirloom.com*

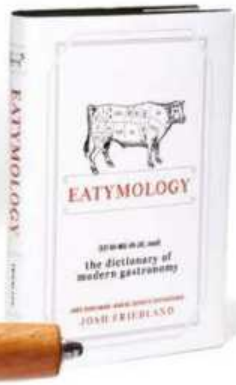
PROP STYLING BY HELEN QUINN.

Bakers will love giving this **Mint Electric Mixer** a spin; the 2.5-quart bowl rotates during mixing. *$50, worldmarket.com*

Help serious cooks keep their tons of tools organized: The three-in-one **Utensil/ Knife Holder + Board** corrals them all in one place. *$40, blackblum.com*

Pre-chill the bowl, and this **Hot and Cold Soapstone Bowl** set prevents premature ice cream melting. The wood holder keeps hands from freezing. *$60 for two sets, uncommongoods.com*

Cowpooling. Kokumi. Huh? ***Eatymology*** will clue foodies in to the latest, greatest gastronomy lingo. *$13, amazon.com*



...owns a Spiralizer—and actually uses it.

Because the cutlery that comes with an Airbnb house just won't do, this **Leather Knife Case** can transport up to four must-have blades. *$149, fullgive.etsy.com*

Homemade anything is always better. Enter this hand-powered **Kilner Butter Churner** (which doubles as a calorie-burner). *$39, bedbathandbeyond.com*

Hand your hostess a bottle of peppery **Frantoio Muraglia Extra-Virgin Olive Oil**, produced in Northern Apulia. *From $40 for 16.9 ounces, williams-sonoma.com*

Just add protein! This **Artisan Meat Kit** comes with everything else needed to make dry-aged steaks and cured meats at home. *$170, drybagsteak.com*

...thinks mixologist would be a cool profession.

Happy hour can always be within reach with this 7-ounce hammered-brass **Belmont Flask**. *$33, stylevisa.com*

Know anyone who likes a little wine with their cheese? Give 'em these **Corkscrew Spreaders**! *$20, williams-sonoma.com*

The iron **Hex Wine Rack** looks extra classy with a textured gold finish. Cheers to that! *$68, jaysonhome.com*

The **Bottle Opener and Resealer** does exactly what you think it does, which is ideal for people who never seem to finish a beer. *$9, momastore.org*

Proof science is fun: **Jefferson's Wood Experiment Collection** is the result of aging bourbon in various types of barrels. *$100 for five 200-ml bottles, jeffersonsbourbon.com for info*

Keep beer cold for 24 hours with the **Classic Vacuum Growler**. *$50, stanley-pmi.com*

Marble-and-soapstone **Drink Rocks** stay in the freezer (until cocktail time) and keep booze cool without watering it down. *$35, areaware.com*

Not sure what's in a Whiskey Fix? Or a Boston Cooler? These foolproof **Bartending Glasses** will enlighten a crowd. *$20 for four, kikkerland.com*

Because the nose knows best, get a whiff of ***The Essential Scratch & Sniff Guide to Becoming a Whiskey Know-It-All***. *$22, amazon.com*

The **Fujifilm Instax Mini 8 Camera** takes photos (using actual film) and prints them out for instant reminiscing. Take that, Instagram! *$100, bestbuy.com*

Kids can stash, well, whatever it is they're into these days in these **Cork Pouches**. *$14, large; $9, small, containerstore.com*

Kids may be able to bear the thought of sitting still for a while if they're doing it in a giant inflatable **Gummy Chair**. *$40, tillys.com*

Blue hair?! Chalk it up to being young. At least the effects of the **12-Piece Streak Hair Chalk Gift Set** aren't permanent. *$15, kohls.com*

...is a tween—and thus thoroughly baffling.

Kids will be in stitches over a **Clash Pots** kit, which comes with supplies—and instructions—to crochet four plant holders. *$41, woolandthegang.com*

The local troop may not be happy that Thin Mints and other classic treats can now be made at home, but the recipient of this **Girl Scouts Cookie Oven** sure will be! *$60, amazon.com*

Hosiery doesn't usually make for the coolest gift, but **Icepop Socks** are a different story. *$15 per pair, dannabananas.com*

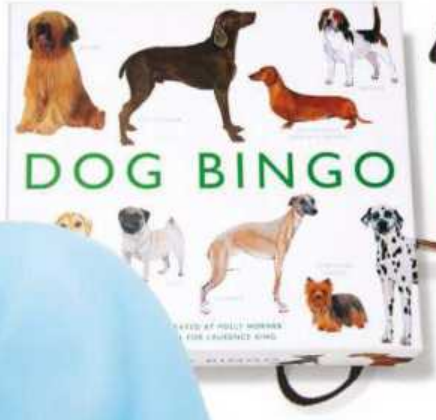
...will happily subject you to all 2,646 of her pet pics.

Cat lovers can step up their lounging game with fleece-lined **Daybreak Scuffs**. *$54, llbean.com*

Keep pups in line with this 16-foot **Retractable Leash**. *$16, dabneylee.com*

Captured in a **Custom Silkscreen Pet Pillow**, her furry friend will always be perfectly posed. *$80, broderpress.com for info*

Dog Bingo plays like the classic game but features 64 breeds instead of boring old numbers. *$30, amazon.com*



Make the dog fetch his own treats. The **Dog Treat Launcher** easily catapults snacks. *$20, kohls.com*

Editor-in-Chief Lauren Purcell's cat, Arlo!

A **Cat Stripes Tote** is ideal for carrying home cat food, books about cats and other cat-related paraphernalia—or, you know, groceries. *$24, seltzergoods.com*

No words are needed for these **Squeakie Emojiz** dog toys. *$7 each, zippypaws.com*

Just like a real pet, a plastic **Dachshund Table Lamp** lights up any room. *$79, allmodern.com*

Crazy-long conference calls are more fun with a **Desktop Croquet Set**—as long as they're not video calls! *$20, kikkerland.com*

Add this to end-of-month deadlines: Each page of the **Wall Art Calendar** transforms into file folders, note cards, bookmarks and other crafts. *$30, papersource.com*

Anyone can act #likeaboss with this **Hex Brass Business Card Holder**. *$35, owenandfred.com*

Organizational freaks will get a hoot out of these **Owl Push Pins**. *$18 for 12, katespade.com*

Give this **City Water** tank, which automatically drains into soil, and you'll no longer be on plant duty while your lucky colleague gets to go on vacay. *$22, fredandfriends.com*

...takes the office Secret Santa swap a little too seriously.

Butter up your toughest coworker with this **Pad of Butter Notepad**. *$10, chroniclebooks.com*

The **People Feeder** holds 32 ounces of treats to attract office pals. *$38, uncommongoods.com*

These 150-page ruled **Notebooks**—featuring kitchenware, sandwiches or coffee accessories—offer plenty of room for to-do lists and musings. *$13 each, popchartlab.com*

...throws killer parties. Lots of them.

Tea for two? More like tea for five with this **Electric Ceramic Kettle**, which boils more than a liter of water in just a few minutes. *$50, bellahousewares.com*

A **Frying Pan Necklace** is a good way to show your friend how much you love her cooking. *$80, food52.com/shop*

Even if she already has the perfect house, there are great ideas to be had in the new book ***Apartment Therapy: Complete + Happy Home***. *$35, amazon.com*

Ring in the new year (and every subsequent meal) with this set of mod **Sittning** acacia wood trivets. *$10, ikea.com for stores*

When not topped with a show-stopping cake, this wood-fiber **Pastry Stand** breaks down into three flat pieces for easy storage. *From $40, epicureancs.com*

Arrow Salad Servers can point the way toward a delicious meal *$42, kanibalhome.com*

Field Candlesticks, available in five colors, have metal wax catchers so no one has to worry about messing up the table. *$27, goodthingny.com*

A hostess can serve retro-inspired snacks on this **Magpie Modern Home Plate Set**. *$40, museumstore.sfmoma.org*

Winning feels extra victorious with the **PopUp Checkers** set because each silicone piece ceremoniously pops open when it's time to be kinged. *$34, designideas.net*

Vintage-inspired **Tea Towel Targets** are a sure shot for any meat eater. *$12 each, amazon.com*

We dare you to find someone who doesn't love dinosaurs and, in turn, these **Stegosaurus Bookends**. Rawr! *$130, zgallerie.com*

Recipients can make sweet music on this **DIY Ukulele**. Once it's assembled, that is. *$50, modcloth.com*

A 14-inch **Rocket Salt and Pepper Grinder** will launch dishes to out-of-this-world levels. *$100, blueribbongeneralstore.com*

...still thinks burps are funny.

The **Retro Alarm Clock Radio** has two LED lights that gradually glow brighter until sleepyheads are forced out of bed. *$35, electrohome.com*

Scandal alert! This **Matchbox Set** features five mini designs made to look like beloved banned books. *$8, outofprintclothing.com*

Help anyone unleash his inner MacGyver with a seven-in-one **Animal Multi Tool**. *$20, kikkerland.com*

nly

Eggland's Best gives you the best in taste, nutrition, and variety.

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COUNTER INTELLIGENCE

Measuring up

The spoons and cups you rely on to portion out ingredients are a cook's most basic tools—but could yours be better? Our pros tested 60 versions and found a few worth the upgrade!

RING TOSS

Seasoned chefs usually take their spoons off the metal ring that keeps a set together. That makes it easier to use one without getting the rest dirty.

PROP STYLING BY MEGUMI EMOTO.

By LISA FREEDMAN Photography by CLAIRE BENOIST

Get set!

Our test kitchen's most-liked measurers, just in time for all the holiday cooking you're about to do.

SUPER-SIZED

This hefty, eight-piece set of **Stainless Steel Measuring Cups** covers all the cooking bases—even those frequently used measurements that typically don't come in a set, like ⅔ cup, 1½ cups and 2 cups. *$60, surlatable.com*

SPACE SAVERS

When not in use, these **Collapsible Measuring Cups** flatten to fit in crowded drawers. Their bright colors mean you'll always be able to spot the size you need. *$10, Squish, amazon.com*

EASY POURING

Made of silicone, these nesting **Sleekstor Measuring Beakers** can be pinched to create a pour spout. Bonus: Each one also has a lid, so you can store leftover contents like pancake batter. *$40, Chef'n, amazon.com*

EXTRA TINY

Even the tablespoon in this **Stainless Steel Measuring Spoons** set fits inside narrow spice jars. And a ⅛ teaspoon (one dash) is included. *$10, Tovolo, amazon.com*

MESS PREVENTER

Don't worry about spilling that teaspoon of vanilla extract; this 7 Piece Liquid Measuring Beaker Set can handle everything spoon sets can—without wobbling or tipping over. $20, oxo.com

WHO KNEW? *If you're measuring a solid you can use the displacement method: For example, to measure one cup of shortening, fill a 2-cup liquid measuring cup with 1 cup water and add spoonfuls of shortening until the line reaches the 2-cup mark. Then simply drain the water. No mess!*

Here's the scoop

1) Should I scoop up my flour with the measuring cup or spoon it in? The recipes in *Rachael Ray Every Day* are always based on our preferred method: scoop and level (dunk your measuring cup into the flour canister, scoop, then level off the top). The spooning-in technique (using a spoon to scoop flour into the measuring cup, then leveling) is a less accurate measure because it results in more air and less flour in the cup—probably not a big deal in most cases, but potentially problematic when you're baking.

2) Is it really so bad to measure liquids in my dry-measure cups or vice versa? It's not the worst thing ever—it's just not very easy or exact. For example, you can't level off a cup of flour in a liquid measuring cup. But you can certainly measure something like milk in a dry cup in a pinch—if you have a steady hand!

3) How should I read a liquid measuring cup? Always put the cup on the counter and get eye level with the meniscus (the curve in the surface of the liquid). Then, read the measurement at the lowest part of that curve. Or you can bypass all of this and pick up an Angled Measuring Cup *(from $5, oxo.com)*, which can be read from above.

PHOTOS BY PETER ARDITO.

EAT, COOK & BE MERRY

Friends. Food. Family. 'Tis the season for Rach!

WEEKDAYS

check local listings www.rachaelrayshow.com

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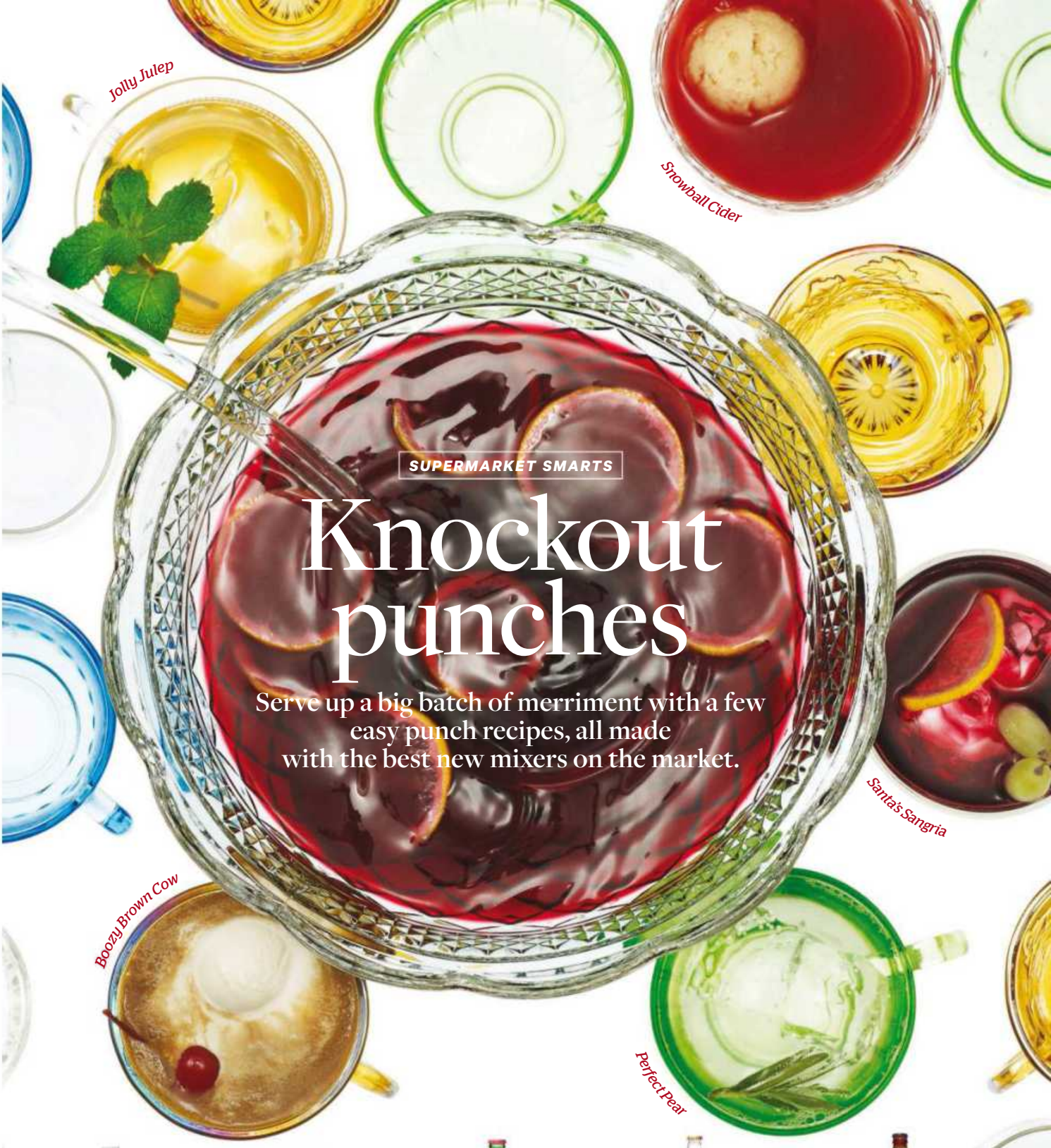

SUPERMARKET SMARTS

Knockout punches

Serve up a big batch of merriment with a few easy punch recipes, all made with the best new mixers on the market.

Jolly Julep

Owl's Brew The Famous Mint Tea *($16.99 for 32 oz.)* + bourbon + mint

Snowball Cider

Ciao Bella Mulled Apple Cider Sorbetto *($4.99 for 1 pint)* + cran-apple juice + seltzer

Santa's Sangria

Reed's Stronger Ginger Beer *($4.99 for four 12-oz. bottles)* + brandy + red wine + lemon slices + grapes

Perfect Pear

Sky Valley Organic Pear Sparkling Soda *($6.99 for four 12-oz. bottles)* + gin + rosemary

Boozy Brown Cow

Coney Island Hard Root Beer *($11.99 for six 12-oz. bottles)* + crème de cacao + vanilla ice cream + maraschino cherries

FOOD STYLING BY MICHELLE GATTON; PROP STYLING BY WENDY SCHELAH; PRODUCT PHOTOS BY PETER ARDITO.

By GRACE RASMUS Photography by LUCAS ZAREBINSKI

BATTLE OF THE...

Granolas

DIY or straight from the package: Which one deserves to top your morning yogurt? —ERICA CLARK

Store-bought

With shelves full of countless combos of nuts, grains and dried fruit, there's plenty to choose from. However, many brands of granola are overly sweet, lack crunch or are loaded with artificial flavorings and preservatives—not worth the extra cost.

	PREP	PRICE
Store-bought	0 minutes	46¢ per ¼ cup
Homemade	5 minutes	28¢ per ¼ cup

Homemade

Baked granola can take 30 minutes or more to make, but our skillet version *(recipe below)*, takes only 5! Stir in dried fruit, toasted nuts and your favorite spices, or just enjoy this simple, super-crunchy granola on its own.

MAKE YOUR OWN! In a nonstick skillet over medium, heat 3 tbsp. butter, 2 tbsp. each honey and brown sugar and 1¼ tsp. ground cinnamon, stirring to combine. Add 2 cups old-fashioned oats; cook, stirring, until golden, 5 minutes. Spread on a greased baking sheet to cool.

LEFTOVER LOVE

Use your 'nog in...

...everything! Polish off that undrunk eggnog in these fun ways.

FRENCH TOAST
Soak 6 slices of bread in a mixture of 1 cup eggnog, 2 eggs and ½ tsp. ground cinnamon. Cook until golden.

WHIPPED CREAM
Beat 1 cup heavy cream to firm peaks; beat in 1 cup eggnog. Use to garnish ice cream, pie or cake (or put a dollop in your morning coffee!).

MUFFINS
Replace the liquid in muffin mix with eggnog; fold in 1 cup cranberries before baking. —SUE LI and JANET TAYLOR McCRACKEN

PHOTOGRAPHY BY PETER ARDITO; SHOWDOWN AND MUFFIN FOOD STYLING BY MICHELLE GATTON; EGGNOG PRODUCT BY AMY ETRA/PHOTOEDIT. ILLUSTRATION BY JUNGYOEN ROH

CHECKOUT!

We snacked our way through 156 new products this month. Here are the best of the best.

*"My secret cookie-swap weapon? Fudgy, fancy **Ghirardelli Double Chocolate Crackle Cookie Mix** ($2.89)."* —Samantha Ulban, associate photo editor

*"Kosher salt is great, but for finishing a dish, nothing beats **The Real Co. Himalayan Pink Rock Salt** ($6.50)."* —Cecily McAndrews, food editor

*"**Lance Quick Starts** in **Everything Bagel** flavor ($2.99), cute sandwich crackers meant for breakfast, are tasty anytime."* —Lisa Freedman, home and market editor

NO CHILD SHOULD GROW UP HUNGRY IN AMERICA

But one in five children struggles with hunger. Share Our Strength's No Kid Hungry campaign is ending child hunger in this nation by connecting kids in need with nutritious food and teaching families how to cook healthy, affordable meals. You can help surround kids with the healthy food they need where they live, learn and play.

Pledge to make No Kid Hungry a reality at NoKidHungry.org.

NO KID HUNGRY®
SHARE OUR STRENGTH

New!

CREAMY
MEETS
DREAMY

NOW IN CHOCOLATE
AND VANILLA

The irresistibly creamy taste of Silk® Cashewmilk is now available in chocolate and vanilla. Life just got a little sweeter. **Taste for yourself.**

Silk
helps you bloom

Silk.com/Cashew

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Two delicious plates, two very different price tags: The meal on the left costs **$98.56** for 8 people, the one on the right, **$24.74**! Save more than $70 on your holiday meal with genius tips from grocery pros.

BY GLORIA DAWSON

SLICE THE PRICE!

Meat Choosing pork over beef loin can save $60: "Stuffing a pork loin with herbs and garlic adds flavor, and it looks gorgeous, too," says Amy Pennington, author of *The Fresh Pantry*. The butcher at your supermarket will butterfly meat for free.

Veggies Green beans and Brussels sprouts are both imported this time of year, but sprouts are $3 cheaper per pound because they're easier to grow, says Robert Schueller from Melissa's Produce.

Stuffing and cranberry sauce For deals on shelf-stable goods, Billy Vasquez, the 99-Cent Chef blogger, skips the supermarket. "Dollar stores carry cranberry sauce, pumpkin and boxes of stuffing."

Bread Frozen bread dough will save you $2 over bakery loaves, according to Teri Gault, CEO of TheGroceryGame.com: "And who doesn't love fresh-baked bread?"

*"**Lundberg Sweet Corn & Bell Pepper Sprouted Risotto*** ($3.49) *makes healthy sprouted rice just indulgent enough."* —Janet Taylor McCracken, test kitchen director

*"Most yogurt drinks are too sweet, but **B'more Organic Strawberry Skyr Smoothie*** ($3.99) *is tart and refreshing."* —Gabriella Gershenson, food features editor

SLICE THE PRICE PHOTO BY PETER ARDITO; FOOD STYLING BY SUSAN OTTAVIANO.

IT'S TASTIER THAN MILK.

PEOPLE WITH TASTE BUDS SAID SO.

Silk Vanilla Almondmilk is deliciously smooth and most people prefer its taste to milk. **Try for yourself.**

Silk
helps you bloom.

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National Taste Test 2013; Silk Vanilla Almondmilk vs. dairy milk. Character is a trademark of WhiteWave Foods.

LOOKING GOOD

Sweet-talk your skin

Peppermint plus

Ice cream and candy canes morph into sweet shoppe–worthy suds in **Lather Mint Chocolate Swirl Soap** *(top and bottom)* and **Peppermint Stick Soap** *(middle)*, each packed with hydrating natural oils. *($10 each, lather.com)*

Plum

The grown-up answer to sugar plums dancing in your head? Sugared plums softening your skin. **The Body Shop Body Butter in Frosted Plum** is so yummy, you'll want to binge-apply, yet also so rich, a little goes a long way. *($21, thebodyshop-usa.com)*

Marshmallow

Heels, elbows and any other rough patches will feel (and smell) great on contact with **Farmhouse Fresh Marshmallow Melt All-Purpose Shea Butter Balm**, a cocoa seed butter–spiked salve. *($12.50, farmhousefreshgoods.com)*

Fig & pistachio

A pastry case for your body, **Laura Mercier Le Petite Soufflés Soufflé Body Crème Collection** includes such mouthwatering whipped creams as Fresh Fig and Crème de Pistache, shown here. *($60 for six, lauramercier.com)*

FOOD STYLING BY MEGUMI EMOTO.

Freezing air. Chapping winds. Whatever winter dishes out, fight dryness with dessert! No mere cream puffs, these finds are effective *and* indulgent.

BY ABBIE KOZOLCHYK PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARKO METZINGER

Chocolate

Scaly skin? Just the excuse to slather yourself in chocolate. Or at least in **Fresh Cocoa Body Exfoliant**, an antioxidant-rich concoction of crushed cocoa and coconut shell that buffs like nobody's business. *($45, fresh.com)*

Citrus & rhubarb

Ask a superstar French pastry chef to dream up body products, which **L'Occitane** did for the **Pierre Hermé holiday collection**, and you get combos as delish on your skin as in his desserts. Our fave? The **Grapefruit Rhubarb Body Lotion**. *($27, usa.loccitane.com)*

Crème brulée

Almost as rich as the dish that inspired it, **Vaseline Lip Therapy Crème Brulée** helps heal and seal chapped lips. You may even be able to prevent them if you start applying it early enough in the season. *($2, at drugstores)*

Coconut & mango

Giving new meaning to sweet cheeks, **Promise Organic Nourishing Coconut Milk Facial Cream with Mango** is soothing and scrumptious—but subtle enough to spare your nose any sensory overload. *($15, cvs.com)*

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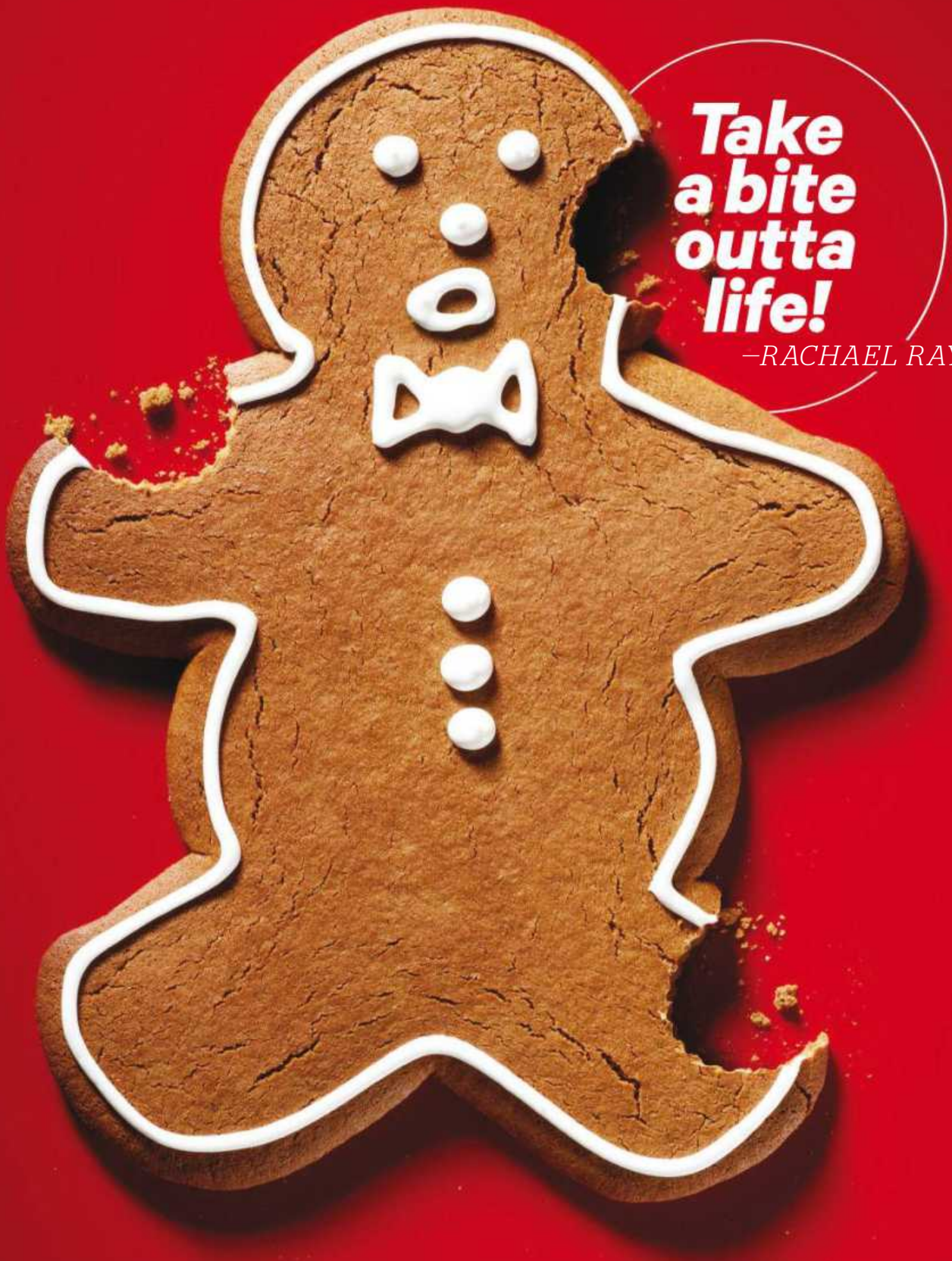
December

HEARTY 30-MINUTE MEALS FOR WINTER *P. 80* • INGENIOUS COOKIE HACKS AND RECIPES *P. 90*
AN ITALIAN SUNDAY SUPPER FROM RACH'S NEW BOOK! *P. 100*



FOOD STYLING BY BRETT KURZWEIL; PROP STYLING BY SARAH GUIDO-LAAKSO.

Photography by LEVI BROWN

This month, warm up with cozy pastas, meaty mains and lots of winter greens.

30 MINUTE MEALS

BY *RACHAEL RAY*

Photography by JOSEPH DE LEO

Winter Greens & Walnut Pesto with Whole-Wheat or Farro Spaghetti (recipe page 83)

Bone-In Pork Chops with Shallot-Mustard Sauce & Watercress SERVES 4

- 4 bone-in pork chops, 1 to 1¼ inches thick
- Salt and pepper
- 3 tbsp. olive oil
- 2 large shallots, finely chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, chopped
- 2 sprigs rosemary, leaves stripped and chopped
- ½ cup dry white wine
- ½ cup chicken stock
- 3 tbsp. capers in brine, drained
- 2 rounded tbsp. grainy mustard
- 2 tbsp. butter
- 2 tbsp. flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped
- 4 fat handfuls watercress or upland cress
- Crusty baguette or warm onion rolls, for mopping

➤ Preheat the oven to 375°.

➤ Season the pork chops on both sides with salt and pepper. In a large cast-iron skillet, heat the oil, three turns of the pan, over medium-high. When the oil ripples and smokes, add the chops. Cook until browned, 2 minutes per side. Using tongs, lift the chops and brown on the edges, then transfer to a plate.

Add the shallots, garlic and rosemary to the skillet; cook, stirring often, until the shallots soften, 1 to 2 minutes. Add the wine and stir until evaporated, about 1 minute more. Add the stock, capers, mustard and butter; swirl to incorporate. Add the parsley, then slide the chops back into the pan. Transfer the skillet to the oven and roast until the pork is cooked through, about 5 minutes. Spoon some sauce from the skillet onto each plate. Top with the chops and serve with a pile of watercress and the warm bread alongside.

Winter Greens & Walnut Pesto with Whole-Wheat or Farro Spaghetti SERVES 4

- ½ cup walnut halves
- 1 bunch (1 to 1¼ lbs.) red Swiss chard or Tuscan kale, stemmed and coarsely chopped
- 1 lemon, juiced (about ¼ cup)
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- About ⅛ tsp. freshly grated or ground nutmeg
- Salt and pepper
- ⅓–½ cup good-quality EVOO
- 1 cup (about 4 oz.) grated pecorino cheese plus some shaved pecorino for serving
- 1 lb. whole-wheat or farro spaghetti

➤ Bring a large pot of water to a boil for the pasta.

➤ In a small skillet, toast the walnuts over medium heat, stirring often, until fragrant, about 5 minutes. Transfer to a plate; let cool.

➤ In a food processor, pulse the chard, lemon juice, garlic and walnuts until the mixture is finely chopped. Season with nutmeg and salt and pepper. With the machine running, stream in the EVOO and process until a smooth pesto forms. Transfer the pesto to a large serving bowl; stir in the grated cheese.

➤ Salt the boiling water, add the pasta and cook to al dente. Reserve 1 cup of starchy cooking water, then drain the pasta. Stir the cooking water into the pesto. Add the pasta to the serving bowl and toss with the pesto. Season; top with the shaved cheese.

Chicken with Olives, Capers & Kale SERVES 4

- 3 tbsp. olive oil
- 2 lbs. boneless, skinless chicken, white or dark meat or combined, cut into large pieces
- Salt and pepper
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 ribs celery with leafy tops, chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 tsp. crushed red pepper
- 1 tsp. fennel seed
- 2 tbsp. tomato paste
- ½ cup dry white or red wine
- 1 can (28 oz.) tomatoes
- ½ cup pitted Kalamata olives, coarsely chopped
- ½ cup cracked green Sicilian olives, pitted and coarsely chopped
- ½ cup chicken stock
- 3 tbsp. capers in brine, drained
- 4 cups baby kale or 1 bunch Tuscan kale, stemmed and sliced
- Crusty bread, for mopping

➤ In a large, deep skillet, heat the oil, three turns of the pan, over medium-high. Season the chicken with salt and pepper, add to the skillet and cook, stirring occasionally, until browned, about 5 minutes. Transfer the chicken to a plate.

➤ Add the onion, celery, garlic, crushed red pepper and fennel seed to the skillet and cook, stirring often, until the onion softens, about 5 minutes. Add the tomato paste and stir until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Add the wine and stir until evaporated, about 2 minutes. Add the tomatoes, crushing them with your hands, then the olives, stock and capers. Add the kale, stir to wilt, then add the chicken and its juices. Simmer, stirring occasionally, until the chicken is cooked through, 8 to 10 minutes. Season and serve with the crusty bread.

CANNED TOMATO CHEAT SHEET PAGE 116

FOOD STYLING BY SIMON ANDREWS; PROP STYLING BY CARLA GONZALEZ-HART.

Pappardelle in Chianti Sauce

SERVES 4

Serve with tricolore salad (endive, radicchio and arugula or romaine) dressed with balsamic, EVOO, salt and pepper.

- **2 tbsp. olive oil**
- **⅓ lb. pancetta or guanciale, chopped or sliced into matchsticks**
- **3 tbsp. rosemary, chopped**
- **4 large cloves garlic, chopped**
- **Coarse black pepper**
- **2 cups Chianti (dry Tuscan red wine)**
- **½ cup chicken stock**
- **Salt**
- **1 lb. whole-wheat or semolina pappardelle**
- **1 cup (4 oz.) grated Parmigiano-Reggiano or Grana Padano**
- **EVOO, for liberal drizzling**

➤ Bring a large pot of water to a boil for the pasta.

➤ In a large skillet, heat the olive oil, two turns of the pan, over medium-high. Add the pancetta and cook, stirring often, until the fat is rendered, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the rosemary, garlic and 2 tsp. pepper; stir a minute. Add the wine and stock; bring to a boil. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the sauce is reduced by half, about 12 minutes.

➤ Salt the boiling water, add the pasta and cook to al dente. Reserve half a mug of the cooking water, then drain the pasta and toss with the sauce. Remove from heat and toss with the cooking water, grated cheese and EVOO. Season with salt and pepper.

Agrodolce Greens & Bacon on Polenta SERVES 4

Agrodolce means sour-sweet in Italian. In this dish, the greens are cooked with vinegar and honey to show off this classic Italian flavor combo.

- **2 tbsp. olive oil**
- **⅓ lb. pancetta, guanciale or meaty bacon, chopped**
- **1 red onion, chopped**
- **4 cloves garlic, sliced**
- **1 tsp. crushed red pepper**
- **1 lb. Swiss chard, Tuscan kale and/or mustard greens, stemmed and coarsely chopped**
- **A little freshly grated or ground nutmeg, to taste**
- **Salt and pepper**
- **2 cups chicken stock**
- **2 tbsp. aged balsamic vinegar**
- **1 tbsp. acacia or other mild honey**
- **1½ cups whole milk**
- **1 cup quick-cooking polenta**
- **½ cup (about 2 oz.) grated Parmigiano-Reggiano**
- **2 tbsp. butter**

➤ In a large skillet, heat the oil, two turns of the pan, over medium-high. Add the pancetta and cook, stirring often, until crispy at the edges, about 3 minutes. Add the onion, garlic and crushed red pepper. Stir a minute, then add the greens and cook, stirring often, until wilted, about 2 minutes. Season the greens with the nutmeg and salt and pepper. Stir in ½ cup stock, the balsamic vinegar and honey; cook until the liquid is reduced by half, about 5 minutes.

➤ In a saucepan, bring the remaining 1½ cups stock and the milk to a low boil. Whisk in the polenta and cook, whisking often, until thick, about 2 minutes. Using a wooden spoon, stir in the cheese and butter; season.

➤ Line shallow bowls with the polenta, making a well in the center. Pile the sweet-and-sour greens into the well, gently mounding in the center.

Milanese Pork Medallions with Warm Fennel & Escarole Salad

SERVES 4

- About ½ cup flour
- Salt and pepper
- 2 large eggs
- ½ cup fine dried breadcrumbs
- ½ cup panko
- ⅓ cup (about 1½ oz.) grated Parmigiano-Reggiano
- 1 large (1 to 1¼ lbs.) pork tenderloin
- Olive oil, for shallow frying
- 2 tbsp. EVOO
- 1 small bulb fennel, cored and thinly sliced with a mandoline or the thin-slice side of box grater
- 1 small onion, quartered and very thinly sliced
- 2 large cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 1 large head escarole, cored and coarsely chopped
- A little freshly grated or ground nutmeg, to taste
- 1 lemon, halved

➤ Set up a breading station: Place the flour in a shallow bowl; season with salt and pepper. In another shallow bowl, whisk the eggs; season. In a third shallow bowl, mix the breadcrumbs, panko and cheese. Cut the pork on an angle into 12 slices. Pound into thin medallions about ¼ inch thick. Coat the pork in the flour, then the eggs, then the breadcrumb mixture, pressing to adhere.

➤ In a large skillet, heat ¼ inch olive oil over medium to medium-high. Working in two batches, cook the pork medallions until crispy, golden brown and cooked through, about 2 minutes per side. Drain on paper towels or a wire rack.

➤ In another large skillet, heat the EVOO, two turns of the pan, over medium. Add the fennel, onion and garlic; cook, stirring often, until crisp-tender, 5 to 7 minutes. Add the escarole and cook, tossing often, until wilted. Add the nutmeg; season. Remove from the heat and add the juice of ½ lemon. Cut the remaining lemon half into 4 wedges.

➤ Pile the escarole mixture on plates and top with 3 medallions of pork and a lemon wedge.

Moussaka-Style Shepherd's Pie

SERVES **4 to 6**

- **1 medium eggplant (choose one that's firm and heavy, about 1¼ lbs.)**
- **Salt**
- **5 russet potatoes (about 3½ lbs.), peeled, each cut into 6 cubes**
- **2 tbsp. olive oil**
- **1 lb. ground lamb or beef**
- **1 tbsp. fresh oregano or marjoram, finely chopped, or 1 tsp. dried oregano or marjoram**
- **1 tsp. crushed red pepper**
- **1 fresh bay leaf**
- **½ tsp. ground allspice**
- **A pinch ground cinnamon**
- **Pepper**
- **1 onion, finely chopped**
- **3–4 cloves garlic, chopped**
- **¼ cup tomato paste**
- **½ cup dry white wine**
- **About 1 cup chicken stock**
- **½ cup crème fraîche**
- **About ⅓ cup whole milk**
- **About ⅛ tsp. freshly grated or ground nutmeg, to taste**
- **1 large egg yolk**
- **1½ cups (about 6 oz.) grated Gruyère**
- **About ½ cup (about 2 oz.) grated Parmigiano-Reggiano**

➤ Position a rack in the center of the oven; preheat the broiler.

➤ Peel the skin off two sides of the eggplant and trim off the top. Slice lengthwise into long, thin planks about ¼ to ½ inch thick, then dice into small pieces. Arrange in a single layer on a kitchen towel; sprinkle with salt.

➤ Place the cubed potatoes in a medium pot and add enough cold water to cover by 1 inch. Bring to a boil, salt the water and cook until tender, 10 to 12 minutes.

➤ Meanwhile, in a large, deep skillet, heat the olive oil, two turns of the pan, over medium-high to high. Add the meat and cook until browned, breaking it up with a spoon, 5 to 6 minutes. Add the oregano, crushed red pepper, bay leaf, allspice and cinnamon; season with salt and pepper. Pat the eggplant dry and add to the skillet along with the onion and garlic. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables soften, 7 to 8 minutes. Add the tomato paste; stir 1 minute. Add the wine; stir until evaporated, about 1 minute. Add the stock; reduce the heat to low. Simmer until the meat mixture thickens, about 3 minutes.

➤ Drain the potatoes and return to the hot pot. Add the crème fraîche and milk; mash until smooth. Add the nutmeg and season. Stir in the egg yolk.

➤ Discard the bay leaf from the meat mixture; transfer to a medium casserole dish. Top with the mashed potatoes and smooth the top with a spatula. Sprinkle with the cheeses; broil until browned and bubbling, 3 to 4 minutes. Serve from the dish into shallow bowls.

Italian-Style Rotisserie-Chicken Noodle Soup with Green Beans SERVES 4

When you buy a piece of Parmigiano-Reggiano, cut off the rind and use it to add flavor to soup. Not making soup right away? The rind will keep for months in an airtight bag in the freezer.

- **2 tbsp. olive oil**
- **1 onion, chopped**
- **2 ribs celery with leafy tops, chopped**
- **1 small cubanelle or green bell pepper, chopped**
- **1 red finger chile pepper—halved, seeded and thinly sliced**
- **2 large cloves garlic, chopped**
- **Salt and pepper**
- **6 cups chicken stock**
- **1 can (15 oz.) diced tomatoes**
- **A piece of Parmigiano-Reggiano rind (optional)**
- **¼–⅓ lb. (a couple of handfuls) fresh green beans or haricots verts (skinny green beans), trimmed and cut into thirds on an angle**
- **¼–⅓ lb. (depending on how noodly you like your soup) dry egg pasta, such as tagliatelle, broken into irregular pieces**
- **1 small rotisserie chicken—meat pulled into bite-size pieces, skin and bones discarded**
- **A fat handful fresh basil, torn**

➤ In a soup pot, heat the oil, two turns of the pan, over medium-high. Add the onion, celery, peppers and garlic; season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, until softened, 7 to 8 minutes. Stir in the stock, tomatoes, and the Parmesan rind, if using. Bring to a boil. Add the green beans and pasta; cook at a low rolling boil until the noodles are al dente and the beans are crisp-tender, about 5 minutes. Remove from the heat, add the chicken, and stir until warmed through, about 3 minutes. Discard the Parmesan rind, if using. Stir in the basil. (For a brothier soup, add a couple of cups of water with the chicken stock.)

Veal Meatballs with Crispy Sage & Wilted Spinach with Lemon SERVES 4

- 2 slices good-quality stale white bread, torn or diced into small pieces
- ½ cup whole milk
- 1¼ lbs. ground veal
- 2 oz. Gorgonzola dolce or other soft Gorgonzola
- 1 large clove garlic, pasted or grated
- A drizzle of EVOO
- About ⅛ tsp. freshly grated or ground nutmeg
- Salt and pepper
- ½ stick (4 tbsp.) butter
- 16 large sage leaves
- ½ cup dry white wine
- ½ cup veal or chicken stock
- 1 lemon, juiced (about ¼ cup)
- 1 lb. stemmed spinach
- Warm crusty rolls or torn ciabatta, for mopping

➤ Preheat the oven to 400°.

➤ In a small bowl, soak the bread in the milk. In a medium bowl, combine the ground veal, Gorgonzola, garlic and a drizzle of EVOO. Squeeze the excess milk from the bread and add bread to the meat mixture. Add the nutmeg and season with salt and pepper. Mix well, then roll into about 20 walnut-size meatballs. Arrange the meatballs on a large parchment-lined or nonstick baking sheet; roast until browned and just cooked through, 10 to 12 minutes.

➤ Meanwhile, in a large skillet, melt the butter over medium. When the butter bubbles, add the sage in a single layer and cook until the leaves are crispy, about 2 minutes; transfer to paper towels to drain. Add the wine and stock to the skillet, increase the heat and boil until reduced by half, about 5 minutes. Add the lemon juice and remove the sauce from the heat.

➤ Arrange the meatballs on a platter and douse with a few spoonfuls of the sauce. Add half the spinach to the skillet and toss with the remaining sauce until spinach begins to wilt. Add the remaining spinach and toss until just wilted, a minute or two. Arrange the wilted spinach on plates and top with the meatballs and crispy sage leaves. Serve with the bread.

White Pizza Frittata SERVES 4

I serve this frittata with a tomato and onion salad for breakfast, lunch or dinner.

- 3 tbsp. olive oil
- 4 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 bag (1 lb.) frozen chopped spinach, defrosted and squeezed dry
- Salt and pepper
- Freshly grated or ground nutmeg, to taste
- 12 eggs
- 1 cup fresh ricotta (cow's or sheep's milk)
- ½ cup (2 oz.) grated Parmigiano-Reggiano (a couple of small handfuls)
- 2 cups (8 oz.) shredded fresh mozzarella

➤ Preheat the oven to 400°.

➤ In a 10-inch ovenproof nonstick skillet, heat the oil, three turns of the pan, over medium-high. Add the garlic and swirl the pan until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add the drained spinach, separating with your fingers; season with salt and pepper and nutmeg. In a medium bowl, whisk the eggs, ricotta and Parm to blend well. Pour into the skillet and cook until the edges are set, about 2 minutes. Transfer to the oven and bake until the top is set, about 12 minutes. Top with the mozzarella and bake until browned and bubbly, 5 to 7 minutes.

30 holiday cookie hacks

These clever tips, easy twists and genius time-savers will have you baking like a pro, even if you're a cookie rookie.

BY TARA BENCH

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOHNNY MILLER
FOOD STYLING
BY SUSAN SPUNGEN

1) BIG DIPPERS
Give store-bought cookies a holiday makeover by dipping them in chocolate and sprinkling on fun toppings. Melt two 3.5-oz. bars of semisweet, bittersweet, milk or white chocolate (for a smooth, glossy finish, temper your chocolate—use our easy method on page 115). Now you're ready to dip and decorate. Dunk the cookies in the chocolate and then in chopped nuts, poppy seeds, dragées, crushed peppermints, coconut flakes, sanding sugar or whatever you dream up! Place on a parchment-lined baking sheet and chill until set.

THUMBS UP!

Think outside the jam jar when filling classic thumbprint cookies. Try these tasty twists!

2) GINGERBREAD CARAMEL FILLING
Mix 1 cup caramel sauce with 1½ tsp. each ground cinnamon and ground ginger, and ¼ tsp. ground cloves. Spoon into cookies.

3) MARSHMALLOW-MINT FILLING
Mix 1 cup marshmallow creme with ¼ cup crushed peppermints. Spoon into cookies; top with more crushed candies.

4) MOCHA MELT FILLING
Microwave 1 cup semisweet chocolate chips at 50 percent power in 15-second increments, stirring in between, until just melted. In another bowl, microwave ¼ cup heavy cream and 2 tsp. instant espresso powder on high in 15-second increments until just steaming; mix into chocolate. Spoon into cookies before the chocolate sets.

5) ORANGE CREAM FILLING
Microwave 2 cups white chocolate chips and 2 tbsp. heavy cream at 50 percent power in 15-second increments, stirring in between, until just melted. Stir in 1½ tbsp. orange zest. Spoon into cookies before the chocolate sets; top with more zest.

6) ROSE-MERRY FILLING
Mix 1 cup vanilla frosting with 1½ tsp. chopped rosemary and 1 tsp. lemon zest. Spoon into cookies; top with more rosemary.

MASTER RECIPE

Vanilla Thumbprint Cookies

MAKES **About 60** PREP **30 min (plus chilling)** BAKE **15 min**

You can also use this rich shortbread dough for the Christmas Tree Shortbreads on page 99.

- **2⅔ cups flour**
- **1 tsp. salt**
- **2 sticks (8 oz.) unsalted butter, at room temperature**
- **1 cup sugar**
- **1 large egg**
- **1 tsp. pure vanilla extract**

1. In a medium bowl, whisk the flour and salt. In a large bowl, using an electric mixer on medium-high, beat the butter and sugar until light and fluffy, about 2 minutes. Beat in the egg and vanilla. Add the flour mixture; beat on low speed until just blended. Shape into a disk, wrap in plastic and refrigerate until firm, about 1½ hours.

2. Position the racks in the top and bottom thirds of the oven; preheat to 350°. Roll 2 tsp. of dough into a 1-inch ball. Repeat with the remaining dough, dividing the balls between two parchment-lined baking sheets, spacing 1 inch apart. Using your thumb, make an indentation in the center of each dough ball.

3. Bake the cookies until firm but not browned, switching and rotating the sheets halfway through baking, 13 to 15 minutes. If the indentions puff up during baking, lightly press them down again with your thumb. Transfer the cookies to a rack and let cool completely.

4. Spoon a scant teaspoon of filling (see recipes at left) into each cookie and let stand or chill until set. Store in an airtight container up to 1 week.

FUN WITH FROSTING

Drizzle, pipe and tint your way to your prettiest holiday cookies yet!

7) INSTANT ICING
Got 15 seconds? Then you've got icing! In a bowl, microwave your favorite store-bought frosting on high until melted, 10 to 15 seconds. Using a spoon, drizzle on cookies (like the sugar and gingerbread cutouts pictured here), or grab a pastry brush and use the melted frosting as a glaze.

MASTER RECIPE

Spiced Gingerbread Cookies

MAKES **About 2 dozen 3-inch cookies** PREP **30 min (plus chilling)** BAKE **15 min**

Use this dough for the Plaid Gingerbread Bars on page 98, too.

- **3 cups flour**
- **2 tsp. ground cinnamon**
- **2 tsp. ground ginger**
- **½ tsp. baking soda**
- **½ tsp. salt**
- **¼ tsp. ground cloves**
- **1 stick (4 oz.) unsalted butter, at room temperature**
- **½ cup (packed) brown sugar**
- **½ cup molasses**
- **1 egg**

1. In a medium bowl, whisk the first 6 ingredients. In a large bowl using an electric mixer on medium-high, beat the butter and brown sugar until light and fluffy, about 2 minutes. Beat in the molasses and egg. Add the flour mixture; beat on low until just blended. Halve the dough. Shape into disks, wrap in plastic and refrigerate until firm, about 1 hour.

2. Position the racks in the upper and lower thirds of the oven; preheat to 350°. On a floured surface, roll out 1 dough disk ⅛ inch thick. Cut out with cookie cutters; divide between two large parchment-lined baking sheets, spacing 1 inch apart. Re-roll scraps; cut out cookies. Repeat with the remaining dough.

3. Bake until the edges are firm, 13 to 15 minutes. Transfer the baking sheets to racks; cool 2 minutes. Transfer the cookies to racks; let cool completely before decorating.

Out of food color? Tint vanilla frosting in these flavorful ways.

8) Dissolve 2 tsp. Country Time Pink Lemonade powder in 2 tsp. water; mix with ½ cup frosting.

9) Dissolve ½ tsp. Kool-Aid Lemonade powder in ½ tsp. water; mix with ½ cup frosting.

10) Dissolve 2 tsp. Tang powder in 1 tsp. water; mix with ½ cup frosting.

11) Mix ½ cup frosting with ¼ tsp. Crystal Light Fruit Punch powder.

12) Dissolve ½ tsp. Kool-Aid Grape powder in ½ tsp. water; mix with ½ cup frosting.

13) Mix ½ cup frosting with ¾ tsp. Mio Blueberry Lemonade liquid concentrate.

14) Dissolve ½ tsp. sugar-free Jell-O Lime powder in 2 tsp. hot water; mix with ½ cup frosting. Use immediately.

15) EASIEST EVER FROSTING

Memorize this formula—2 cups + 1 stick—and you can whip up frosting in an instant. Using an electric mixer on medium-low, beat 2 cups confectioners' sugar with 1 stick room-temperature butter. Add a teaspoon or so of water or milk to thin to your desired consistency. Makes about 1½ cups.

16) SURPRISE TWIST

To make candy cane–colored swirls, fill one pastry bag with red frosting and another with white. Secure the tops with rubber bands; snip off ½ inch from the tips. Place both bags in a third pastry bag fitted with a coupler (available at crafts stores). Close the third pastry bag with a rubber band, fit with an open star tip and start piping!

NO-BAKE WONDERS

Create swap-worthy cookies without turning on the oven!

17) CRISPY CANES
In a large pot, melt 4 tbsp. butter over medium. Add 10 oz. marshmallows; cook, stirring often, until melted, 3 to 5 minutes. Off heat, stir in ½ cup white chocolate chips and ¼ cup crushed peppermints. Stir in 6 cups puffed rice cereal; press into a greased 9-by-13-inch pan. Cool, then cut out with a candy-cane cutter. Drizzle with Instant Icing made with vanilla frosting (see #7) and sprinkle with crushed peppermints. Makes about 16.

18) CHOCOLATE HAYSTACKS
Microwave 2 cups chopped white or semisweet chocolate at 50 percent power in 15-second increments, stirring in between, until just melted. Stir in 3 cups frosted corn flakes. Spoon onto 2 parchment-lined baking sheets. Sprinkle with colored sugar; chill until set, about 30 minutes. Makes about 20.

19) COCONUTTY SNOWBALLS
In a bowl using an electric mixer on medium, beat 1 cup confectioners' sugar, 1 cup sweetened shredded coconut, ½ cup almond flour, ¼ cup chopped dried cranberries, 1 tsp. orange zest, 2 tbsp. orange juice, ½ tsp. pure vanilla extract and a pinch of salt until just blended. Roll into 1-inch balls; roll in chopped toasted sliced almonds. Makes about 30.

20) PEANUT BUTTER PRETZEL BARS
Microwave ½ cup peanut butter, ½ cup chocolate chips, 6 tbsp. butter and ½ tsp. pure vanilla extract on high in 15-second increments, stirring in between, until just melted. Add 1 cup crushed pretzels and 1 cup confectioners' sugar. Using an electric mixer on medium, beat to blend. Immediately press into a foil-lined 8-inch square pan. Microwave 1 cup semisweet chocolate chips at 50 percent power in 15-second increments, stirring in between, until just melted. Pour over cookie base. Decorate immediately with sprinkles and pretzels. Let stand until set, about 1 hour. Cut into 2-inch squares. Makes 16.

FROST FREE

These fun decorating alternatives to icing make cookies easy to pack, too.

21) GELTY PLEASURES
For homemade Hanukkah coins, spray both sides of round vanilla cookies, like Golden Oreos, with gold or silver food spray. Let the cookies dry; spray with another coat, if needed. Transfer to small mesh bags and tie with ribbon.

22) STROKE OF GENIUS
Jazz up cookies with edible paint! Place 3 egg yolks in separate bowls. Mix with food color and use a paint brush to decorate cookies before they go in the oven. The colors will get brighter after they're baked. (Pictured here on Soft Sugar Cookies; recipe below.)

23) HOLIDAY SPARKLERS
Add shimmer to your next cookie swap! Roll dough into balls, roll in colored sugar, press slightly to flatten and bake. (Pictured here on Soft Sugar Cookies; recipe below.)

MASTER RECIPE

Soft Sugar Cookies

MAKES **About 3 dozen 3-inch cookies** PREP **15 min (plus chilling)** BAKE **10 min**

- **3 cups flour**
- **1 tsp. baking powder**
- **½ tsp. salt**
- **¼ tsp. baking soda**
- **1½ sticks unsalted butter, at room temperature**
- **1 cup sugar**
- **1 egg**
- **1 tsp. pure vanilla extract**
- **¼ cup sour cream**

1. In a medium bowl, whisk the first 4 ingredients. In a large bowl using an electric mixer on medium-high, beat the butter until light and fluffy, about 2 minutes. Add the sugar; beat to blend. Beat in the egg and vanilla, then the sour cream. Add the flour mixture; beat on low until just blended. Halve the dough; shape into disks. Wrap in plastic and chill until firm, 1½ to 2 hours.

2. Preheat the oven to 375°. On a floured surface, roll out 1 dough disk about ⅛ inch thick. Cut out with cookie cutters; divide between two large parchment-lined baking sheets, spacing 1 inch apart. Re-roll scraps; cut out cookies. Repeat with the remaining dough.

3. Bake until the bottoms of the cookies are light golden, 6 to 7 minutes. Transfer to a rack; let cool.

STAR POWER

One cookie cutter is all you need to turn out lots of fun, festive designs.

24) MINI MENORAH
Using a piping bag fitted with a small plain tip or a resealable bag with the corner snipped off, decorate the cookie with yellow, white and blue frosting. Use sanding sugar for the flames and menorah base.

25) SNOWFLAKE
Using a piping bag fitted with a small plain tip or a resealable bag with the corner snipped off, decorate the cookie with lines and dots of white frosting. Sprinkle with clear sanding sugar.

26) RUDOLPH
Frost the cookie with chocolate frosting. Add broken pretzels for antlers, white M&M's and black icing for eyes and a red M&M's for a nose.

27) POINSETTIA
Using a piping bag fitted with a leaf tip, pipe green frosting leaves between the star points. Pipe red frosting petals on top and decorate the center with a yellow M&M's.

28) STARRY SANTA
Frost one star point red for a hat. Add white-frosting details. Use frosting to stick on pieces of licorice for eyes and a cinnamon candy for the nose. Cover the rest with white icing for the beard.

29) SLAB HAPPY!
Save time on chilling, rolling and cutting by making pretty plaid bar cookies *(opposite)*.

Plaid Gingerbread Bars

MAKES **24** PREP **15 min**
BAKE **20 min**

- **1 batch Spiced Gingerbread Cookie dough (see page 95)**
- **2 batches Easiest Ever Frosting (see #15) or 2 tubs (16 oz. each) store-bought vanilla frosting**
- **Food color (we used red, yellow and green)**

1. Preheat the oven to 350°. Line a 9-by-13-inch baking pan with parchment, allowing a few inches of paper to hang over the two long sides. Press the gingerbread dough evenly into the lined pan.

2. Bake until the top is dry, 18 to 20 minutes. Transfer to a rack and let cool completely in the pan. Using the parchment paper overhang, lift the cookie out of the pan and invert onto a cutting board; remove parchment.

3. Place half the frosting in a medium bowl; tint with red food color and spread on the cookie. Divide the remaining frosting between three small bowls. Tint one yellow, one green and leave one white. Place the frosting in three separate resealable bags, snipping off a tiny corner of each. Decorate the cookie with stripes of yellow, green and white frosting, forming a plaid pattern. Cut into 24 squares.

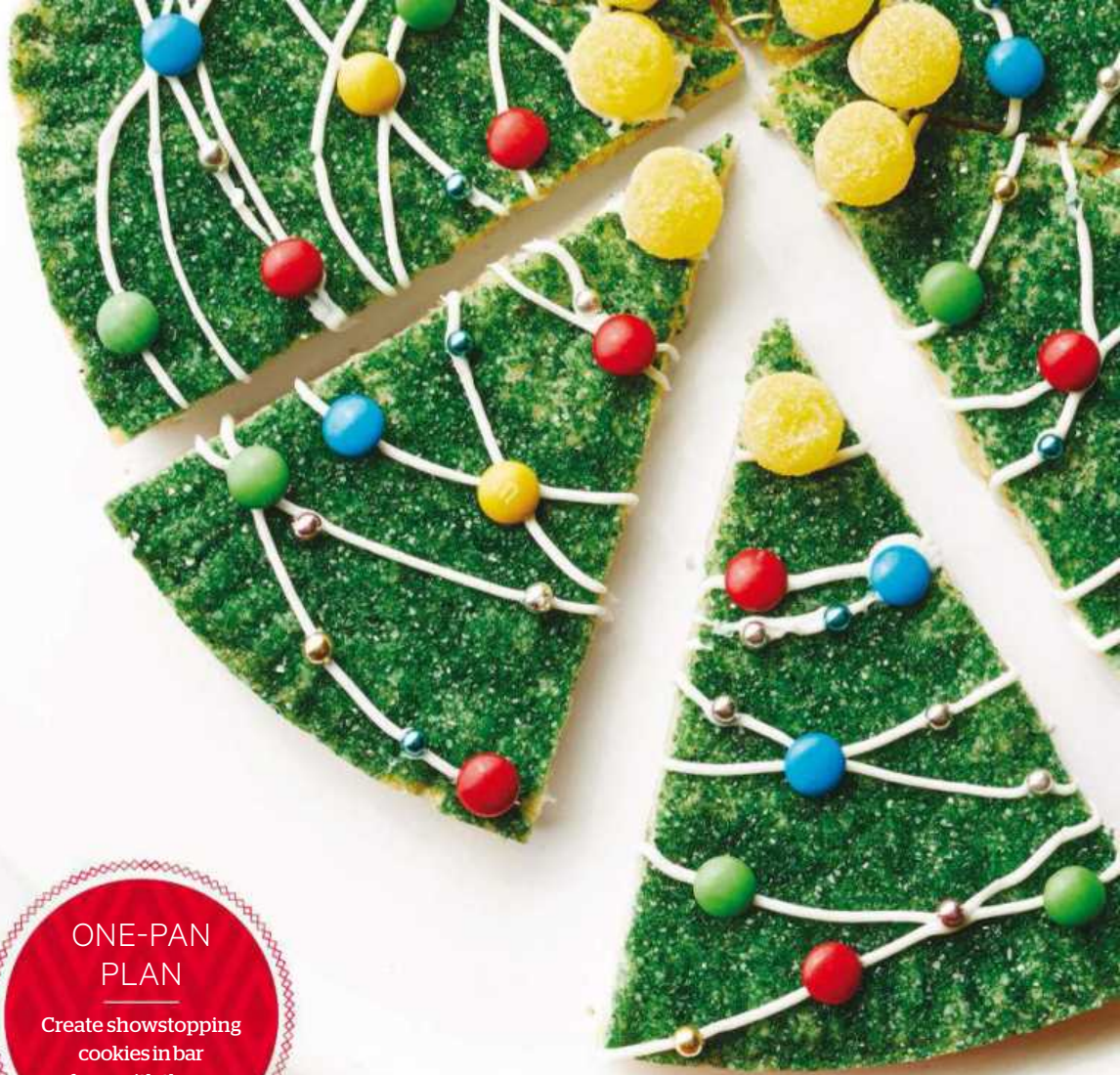
30) IN THE ROUND
No need for a cutter: Turn classic shortbread into decked-out Christmas trees.

Christmas Tree Shortbreads

MAKES **16** PREP **15 min**
BAKE **25 min**

- **1 batch Vanilla Thumbprint Cookie dough (see page 93)**
- **4 tbsp. green colored sugar**
- **Instant Icing (see #7)**
- **M&M's Minis, dragées and yellow gum drops**

1. Position a rack in the center of the oven and preheat to 350°. Halve the cookie dough and press each half into two parchment-lined 9-inch round pans.
2. Using the tines of a fork, gently crimp the edges of the dough. Sprinkle 2 tbsp. green colored sugar over the dough in each pan. Bake until golden around the edges and just cooked in the middle, about 25 minutes. While the cookies are still warm, cut each into 8 wedges directly in the pan. Place pans on a rack; let cool completely.
3. Fill a resealable plastic bag with vanilla Instant Icing, snip off a small piece from the corner of the bag and form garlands over the trees. Decorate, using M&M's minis and dragées for ornaments and yellow gum drops for stars.



ONE-PAN PLAN

Create showstopping cookies in bar form with these genius ideas!

EVERYONE IS ITALIAN ON SUNDAY

By RACHAEL RAY

To give you a taste of my new cookbook, I pulled together some of my favorite recipes to create a meal that's so good you'll want to spend all day at the table. Serve it at the holidays, at dinner with friends—or on any given Sunday.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRISTINA HOLMES

MY GRANDFATHER WAS SICILIAN, one of fourteen children, and one of the four who came to America. He settled in upstate New York and eventually became a wonderful stonemason who worked on the rebuilding of a historical site, Fort Ticonderoga. He was a strong man with lots of energy and a great sense of humor. He was a wonderful gardener and cook as well, played the concertina, and told great stories.

My mom was the eldest of my grandfather's ten children. She grew up in a modest home on a tiny peninsula on Lake George, but to hear her talk about her childhood, you might think she was born a princess who lived in a castle with all the riches and benefits of privilege. You never would have guessed she was the daughter of an immigrant stonemason who had to work eighty or more hours a week while growing and harvesting enough food for so many mouths. My mother's recollection of her childhood has always been my favorite bedtime story. Even now, all grown up, I conjure her memories like a treasured fairy tale.

Once upon a time, everyone would gather at my grandfather's house at the edge of the majestic Lake George on Sundays. From fellow Italian stoneworkers to neighbors from all around, all were welcome and none were turned away. The kitchen table was often moved outside to the lawn, because more people came to eat than any room in the house could hold.

Grandpa would cook all sorts of meats and sausages in a big pot of tomato sauce. Then he would serve them on a large platter and toss lots of spaghetti into the sauce. He would serve a huge salad of vegetables from his own garden, and down at the end of the table he would put out two big, five-gallon tubs of ice cream beside a wheelbarrow filled with ripe melons. With the garden machete—which hung from a string tied to his belt and was like an extension of his arm—Grandpa would slice through the melons, scoop out the seeds with his hand, and fill the sweet melon centers with vanilla ice cream. No matter how many came, there was always enough food for everyone. After the meal, the men would play their instruments and sing, and Zia (Aunt) Patrina would swirl her moppina (slang for dish towel) up in the air over her head and lead the kids in a dance around the fire.

Anyone can be an Italian on Sundays, and any day can be made to feel like a Sunday. The magic of an Italian Sunday is in human connections. Food is the great communicator, connecting generations and helping build memories and friendships. It gathers us together and teaches us the importance of sharing not just food, but the best of ourselves.

Italian food makes us smile. Think of the first time you successfully twirled spaghetti around the tines of your fork or saw lasagna piled high just waiting for that first bite. How many times have you taken a cheesy, gooey or crispy bite of any Italian treat and it made you close your eyes in utter delight that anything could be so good? Even something as simple as a big, buttery bite of nutty Parmigiano-Reggiano followed by a large sip of red wine—wow!

The meaning of being Italian on Sunday is to prepare food with love, to savor it and to share it with others, sometimes loudly, always with gusto. Being Italian on Sunday is about bringing out your lust for life and passion for all things: food, storytelling, wine, music and each other. Being Italian on Sunday is about emotion and finding beauty in every delicious moment of our lives.

MENU

Butternut-Sage Crostini

Sausage-Stuffed Spicy Olives

Blood Orange 75s

Linguine with Crab

Celery, Portobello and Parsley Salad

Easy Rib Roast with Roasted Garlic and Herbs

Mom's Horseradish Sauce

Cauliflower with Rosemary au Gratin

Green Beans with Shallots

Olive Oil Cake

Cake Cream

FOOD STYLING BY ALISON ATTENBOROUGH; PROP STYLING BY PAIGE HICKS; FASHION STYLING BY JESSICA ZINDREN; HAIR AND MAKEUP BY VIVI LAPIDUS.
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Celery, Portobello and Parsley Salad, recipe on page 106

Butternut-Sage Crostini, recipe on page 104

Sausage-Stuffed Spicy Olives, recipe on page 104

Butternut-Sage Crostini SERVES 6

- 1 large butternut squash, halved lengthwise and seeded
- Olive oil, for brushing and drizzling
- Salt and pepper
- Freshly grated or ground nutmeg
- 1 baguette, cut on an angle into ¼-inch-thick slices
- 2 cloves garlic, halved
- Flaky sea salt (optional)
- 4 tbsp. (½ stick) butter
- 12 fresh sage leaves
- ½ cup freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano

➤ Preheat the oven to 400°.
➤ Brush the cut sides of the squash with oil; season with salt, pepper and nutmeg. Place on a baking sheet and roast until tender, 35 to 40 minutes. Let cool. Scrape the roasted squash flesh into a food processor and puree.
➤ Scatter the baguette slices on a large baking sheet; toast on both sides. Rub the toasts with the cut sides of the garlic, drizzle or brush with olive oil and season with flaky sea salt, if using.
➤ In a small skillet, melt the butter over medium heat. When the foam subsides, add the sage leaves and cook until crisp. Remove the sage leaves and add the browned butter to the squash puree. Stir in the Parm and half the sage. Taste and adjust the seasonings. Transfer to a bowl and garnish with the remaining sage. Serve with the toasts.

Sausage-Stuffed Spicy Olives MAKES 48

These olives can be breaded then frozen so you always have some on hand. Frying them frozen will take 5 to 6 minutes. Always fry in small batches and bring your oil back up to temp before frying the next batch.

- 48 large pitted green Sicilian olives (about 2 cups)
- 2 tbsp. fruity EVOO
- Canola, vegetable or sunflower oil, for frying
- 1 cup flour
- 4 eggs, preferably free-range organic
- 1 cup fine dry breadcrumbs
- ¼ cup finely grated pecorino
- 2 tbsp. very finely chopped flat-leaf parsley leaves
- 1 tbsp. finely chopped fresh thyme leaves
- ½ lb. hot Italian sausage

➤ Rinse the olives in water twice, then dry them very well. Put them in a medium bowl and toss with the EVOO.
➤ Fill a countertop fryer with oil or pour a few inches of oil into a large Dutch oven. Heat the oil to 350°. (If using a Dutch oven, use a deep-fry thermometer to check the temperature.)
➤ Set up a breading station: Line up 3 shallow bowls on the counter. Spread the flour out in one, beat the eggs in the second, and mix the breadcrumbs, pecorino, parsley and thyme in the third.
➤ Using a chopstick, stuff the olives with the sausage. Coat the olives in the flour, then in the egg, then in the breadcrumb mixture, pressing to adhere.
➤ Working in batches, fry the olives until deep golden, stirring occasionally, about 3 minutes per batch. Drain.

Blood Orange 75 MAKES 1

French 75 is a classic cocktail made with either gin or cognac (this is hotly contested), lemon juice, simple syrup and Champagne. My husband, John, made this version on my show. In this recipe, I prefer cognac over gin because it pairs better with the blood orange juice.

- 1 oz. cognac
- 1 oz. fresh blood orange juice
- Dash of orange bitters
- Chilled Champagne, to top
- Blood orange twist, for garnish

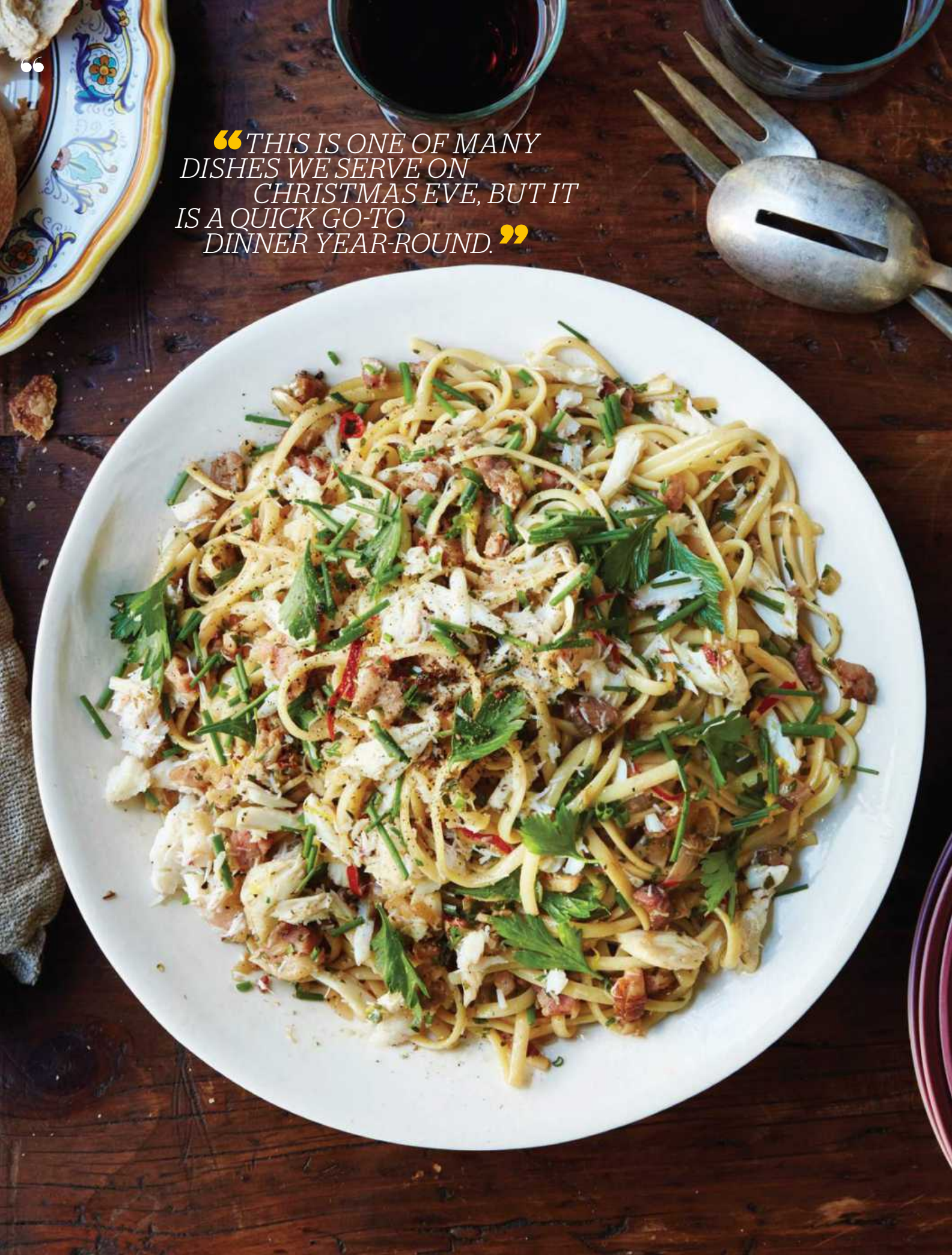
➤ In an ice-filled cocktail shaker, combine the cognac, blood orange juice and bitters. Shake well and strain into a Champagne flute. Top with chilled Champagne. Garnish with the blood orange twist.

Linguine with Crab SERVES 4 to 6

You can make this simply delicious dish in just minutes. For this menu, serve it as a pasta course before the roast and sides.

- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- ¼ lb. pancetta, finely diced
- 4 large shallots, chopped
- 4 large cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 2 small red chiles, such as Holland or Fresno chiles, thinly sliced
- 3 tbsp. fresh thyme leaves, chopped
- Salt and pepper
- 1 cup dry vermouth or dry white wine
- 2 tbsp. butter
- 1 lb. linguine
- 1 lb. lump, king or snow crabmeat
- Zest (about 1½ tbsp.) and juice (about 3 tbsp.) of 1 lemon, preferably organic
- ¼ cup chopped flat-leaf parsley
- ¼ cup minced fresh chives

➤ Bring a large pot of water to a boil for the pasta.
➤ In a large, deep skillet, heat the oil, two turns of the pan, over medium-high. When the oil ripples, add the pancetta and render for 2 to 3 minutes. Add the shallots, garlic, chiles and thyme. Season with salt and pepper and stir for 2 to 3 minutes. Add the vermouth and cook until the liquid has reduced by half, about 5 minutes. Swirl in the butter, then reduce the heat to low to keep the sauce warm while the pasta cooks.
➤ Salt the boiling water; cook the pasta to just shy of al dente. Ladle out about a cup of the pasta cooking water and add it to the sauce along with the crabmeat and lemon zest and juice. Drain the pasta and add it to the sauce. Toss with tongs for 1 to 2 minutes for the pasta to finish cooking and to allow the flavors to be absorbed. Toss in the parsley and chives; season.


“THIS IS ONE OF MANY DISHES WE SERVE ON CHRISTMAS EVE, BUT IT IS A QUICK GO-TO DINNER YEAR-ROUND.”

Celery, Portobello and Parsley Salad SERVES **4 to 6**

Use this salad with menus featuring veal or beef as the main course.

4 or 5 ribs celery with leafy tops, very thinly sliced on an angle
4 portobello mushroom caps, gills scraped, very thinly sliced
1 cup flat-leaf parsley tops, coarsely chopped
2 cups baby kale or arugula
Juice of 1½ lemons (about ¼ cup)
¼ cup EVOO
Salt and pepper
Pecorino or Parmigiano-Reggiano, shaved with a vegetable peeler (optional)

➤ In a bowl, combine the celery, mushrooms, parsley, kale, lemon juice and EVOO. Season with salt and pepper and let the salad stand for a few minutes until the mushrooms soften and mellow and the flavors combine. If you want, add the shaved pecorino just before serving.

Easy Rib Roast with Roasted Garlic and Herbs SERVES **10 to 12**

This is a beautiful holiday or special-occasion roast that is impressive but very simple to prepare. Though my mom's horseradish sauce is not a traditional Italian recipe, it is traditional in our family and she is an Italian, so it makes the cut. Serve this with a baguette warmed in the oven and then sliced.

2 heads garlic, tops cut off to expose the cloves
EVOO, for drizzling
Salt and pepper
8 tbsp. (1 stick) butter, at room temperature
Leaves from 4 sprigs fresh rosemary, finely chopped
Leaves from a few sprigs fresh marjoram, finely chopped
2 tbsp. fresh thyme leaves, chopped
1 boneless beef rib roast (10 to 12 lbs.), at room temperature
Mom's Horseradish Sauce (recipe on page 109)

➤ Position a rack in the center of the oven; preheat to 400°.
➤ Drizzle the garlic with EVOO; season with salt and pepper. Wrap in foil; roast until tender and caramel in color, about 40 minutes. When the garlic is done, reduce the oven temperature to 325°.
➤ When cool enough to handle, squeeze the roasted garlic into a bowl; mash to a paste. Add the butter, rosemary, marjoram and thyme; season. Coat the roast with the herb butter; stand it up in a roasting pan.
➤ Cook the roast until it registers 125° to 130° on an instant-read thermometer (for medium-rare), about 2¾ hours. Let the roast rest, covered with foil and a kitchen towel, for 1 hour. Carve and serve with Mom's Horseradish Sauce.

THE MAIN EVENT

Facing page, from top: **Lots of sliced celery gives the salad an addictive crunch. Make serving easy by setting out the roast and sides buffet-style.** ***This page, from top left:*** **Put the roast out on a cutting board so guests can admire it before digging in. The key to the Green Beans with Shallots (recipe on page 109) is lots of slow-cooked shallots. A hearty red is great with this menu (try Nero d'Avola, an affordable, delicious variety from southern Italy).**

"THE CHEESY CAULIFLOWER GRATIN IS POPULAR AT ANY SPECIAL DINNER—AND ALSO MAKES A HEARTY VEGETARIAN MAIN."

Mom's Horseradish Sauce

MAKES **About 3 cups**

- **2 cups sour cream or crème fraîche**
- **½ cup unsweetened applesauce, preferably organic**
- **¼ cup fine dry breadcrumbs**
- **¼ cup minced fresh chives**
- **¼ cup prepared horseradish or 3 tbsp. grated peeled fresh horseradish root**
- **Salt and pepper**

➤ In a bowl, combine all the ingredients. Let stand until the breadcrumbs soften, about 15 minutes. Adjust the seasonings.

Cauliflower with Rosemary au Gratin

SERVES **6 to 8 as a side or 3 to 4 as a main**

- **Salt**
- **1 large or 2 medium heads cauliflower (about 3 lbs.), cut into florets (about 8 cups)**
- **4 tbsp. (½ stick) butter**
- **2 cloves garlic, finely chopped**
- **2 tbsp. fresh rosemary leaves, finely chopped**
- **3 tbsp. flour**
- **½ cup dry white wine or vegetable or chicken stock**
- **2½ cups milk, warmed**
- **Pepper**
- **Freshly grated or ground nutmeg**
- **1 egg yolk, preferably free-range organic**
- **1½ cups freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano**

➤ Preheat the oven to 375°.

➤ Fill a bowl with ice water. In a large pot, bring about 4 inches of water to a boil. Salt the water, add the cauliflower and cook until crisp-tender, 3 to 4 minutes. Drain the cauliflower and cold-shock in the ice water. Drain very well.

➤ In a saucepan, melt the butter over medium to medium-high heat. When the butter foams, add the garlic and rosemary and whisk in the flour. When the flour bubbles, add the wine and cook until reduced to a few tablespoons. Whisk in the warm milk and season with salt, pepper and nutmeg. In a small bowl, beat the egg yolk. Stir in a ladleful of sauce to prevent the egg from cooking, then pour the tempered yolk into the sauce. Stir in ¾ cup of the cheese until it melts.

➤ Pour half the sauce into a 9-by-13-inch baking dish and add all of the cauliflower.

Top with the remaining sauce and ¾ cup cheese. (This dish may be made ahead to this point and refrigerated. Just bring it back to room temperature before baking.)

➤ Bake until browned and bubbling and hot all the way through, 15 to 20 minutes.

Green Beans with Shallots

SERVES **6 to 8**

I was a customer of the Montcalm restaurant in the Lake George region of New York from the time I was a little girl until the restaurant closed when I was 45. I always ordered the same meal: roast chicken with no potatoes and extra green beans. They were the most delicious green beans ever. Dino, the owner, told me it was about slow-cooking the shallots in lots of butter. Now I am famous for the green beans, too. We make these for every single holiday.

- **6 tbsp. (¾ stick) butter**
- **6 large shallots, chopped**
- **2 cups chicken stock**
- **Salt and pepper**
- **1½ lbs. haricots verts (skinny green beans)**

➤ In a large skillet, melt the butter over medium heat. Add the shallots, partially cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until very soft and sweet but not browned, about 20 minutes. (If the shallots start to brown, reduce the heat.) Add the stock and turn off the heat.

➤ Fill a bowl with ice water. In a deep skillet, bring 3 inches of water to a boil. Salt the water, add the green beans and cook until crisp-tender, 3 to 4 minutes. Drain the green beans and cold-shock in the ice water. Drain very well.

➤ Add the green beans to the shallots and cover until ready to serve. Reheat over medium just to heat through.

Olive Oil Cake SERVES **8 to 12**

In this signature Italian dessert, olive oil replaces the usual butter. This cake is subtly sweet and citrusy. Serve as is or with fresh berries and some Cake Cream (recipe at right).

- **Butter and flour, for coating the Bundt pan**
- **4 eggs, preferably free-range organic**
- **¾ cup sugar**
- **2 cups flour, sifted**
- **1 cup cornmeal**
- **¾ cup extra-light olive oil**
- **1 pear (I use Anjou), peeled and grated**
- **2 tbsp. limoncello**
- **1 tbsp. baking powder**
- **1 tbsp. lemon zest, preferably from an organic lemon**
- **½ cup whole milk**
- **Cake Cream (recipe at right)**

➤ Position a rack in the center of the oven; preheat to 325°. Grease and flour a 10- to 12-cup Bundt pan.

➤ In a bowl using an electric mixer, beat the eggs and sugar on medium until creamy and light yellow, 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in the flour, cornmeal, olive oil, pear, limoncello, baking powder and lemon zest until just combined. Add the milk and stir until just combined.

➤ Scrape the batter into the pan. Bake until a wooden skewer inserted in the center comes out clean, about 50 minutes. Turn the oven off, open the oven door slightly and leave the cake in the oven to cool.

Cake Cream MAKES **About 4 cups**

- **2 cups whole milk**
- **2 tsp. pure vanilla extract**
- **6 egg yolks, preferably free-range organic**
- **1 cup sugar**
- **¼ cup flour**
- **2 tbsp. cornstarch**
- **1 tbsp. butter**

➤ In a saucepan, heat the milk over medium until almost boiling. Remove from the heat and stir in the vanilla. Set aside.

➤ In a bowl using an electric mixer, beat the egg yolks and sugar on medium until frothy and pale yellow, 1 to 2 minutes. Whisk in the flour and cornstarch. Pour in the hot milk very slowly, whisking briskly and constantly to prevent the eggs from cooking.

➤ Return the mixture to the saucepan and cook, stirring constantly, until almost boiling (do not allow to boil), about 5 minutes. Remove from the heat, stir in the butter and let cool to room temp before refrigerating. The consistency when set should be similar to pudding.

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scratchpad

EASY PORCHETTA WITH ROASTED VEGETABLES
FROM PAGE 35

30 HOLIDAY COOKIE HACKS
FROM PAGE 90

KITCHEN COACH

Learning to (butter)fly!

Butterflied, stuffed and tied roasts aren't just fancy—they cook faster. Not to mention, they're more flavorful because of their delicious fillings. Follow this easy technique for pork, beef or lamb loins or chicken or turkey breasts—it's all good stuff!

1 Place your meat on a cutting board. Position the blade of a chef's knife parallel to the cutting board about a third of the way up the side of the loin. Holding the meat in place with the palm of your free hand, slice into the loin, leaving about ½ inch intact along the other side. Be careful not to cut it all the way through.

2 Open the thick top flap of meat like a book, then make another horizontal cut in that piece, being careful not to slice all the way through. Open like a book again and pound the loin with a meat mallet to flatten.

3 Spread your filling on the meat (we used chopped rosemary, sage, garlic and orange zest for the Easy Porchetta recipe on page 35), leaving a ½-inch border all around. Tightly roll up the loin.

4 Cut 6 to 8 pieces of kitchen twine and arrange them about 1½ inches apart. Set the loin on top, seam side down, then tie the strings tightly. Snip them off before slicing and serving.

SMART SHORTCUT

Go for a dip!

To give store-bought cookies a holiday makeover, we dipped them in melted chocolate and sprinkled them with fun toppings. To make sure the chocolate hardens properly, it's best to temper it, which means to melt it slowly and gently. Our method:

1. Finely chop 2 chocolate bars (3.5 oz. each).

2. In a bowl, microwave about three-quarters of the chopped chocolate at 50 percent power in 15-second increments, stirring in between, until just melted.

3. Sprinkle with the remaining chocolate and stir until the mixture is entirely melted and smooth. Makes 1 cup.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ALYSSA NASSNER

CHICKEN WITH OLIVES, CAPERS & KALE
FROM PAGE 83

PANTRY RAID

Yes, you can!

A pantry essential, canned tomatoes come in many guises. Use this handy chart to pick the best type for your recipe.

chunkiest

smoothest

Whole tomatoes	Peeled and packed in their own juices, these are the best-quality tomatoes you can buy in a can. (Bruised tomatoes would end up crushed or pureed instead.) Whole tomatoes are best for long-cooking dishes because they break down as they simmer—but you can slice, dice or chop them to suit whatever you're cooking.
Diced tomatoes	This pre-cut, juice-packed option can be a great time-saver. But because they're often spiked with calcium chloride to help maintain their firm structure, they're not the top pick for smooth pasta sauces.
Stewed tomatoes	These are sliced and stewed with other ingredients, such as bell peppers, onion, celery, basil, garlic and oregano. Use them as a pasta sauce starter.
Crushed tomatoes	These pulverized tomatoes are semi-smooth, putting them somewhere between diced tomatoes and tomato sauce—a smart pick for fast-cooking soups.
Tomato sauce	Be sure to check the label: This smooth, pourable mixture can be a high-quality, cooked-then-strained tomato puree (which is what you're looking for) or a blend of tomato paste and water. Some brands also include sugar, salt, garlic powder or red pepper, which are great flavor boosters for fast-cooking pasta sauces.
Tomato puree	Also known as passata, tomato puree is made with tomatoes that have been cooked briefly then strained. Denser than crushed tomatoes but less concentrated than tomato paste, it adds a fresh, bright flavor to meat loaves, casseroles and sauces.
Tomato paste	Choose this concentrated paste of long-cooked, strained-then-reduced tomatoes when you want to add flavor but not extra moisture to soups, sauces and marinades.

TOMATOES CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: PHOTOGRAPHY BY CLAIRE BENOIST; FOOD STYLING BY CLAUDIA FICCA; GETTY IMAGES (2).

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PET PROJECT

Merry me!

If there were such a thing as a canine cookie swap, these treats would be a crowd fave. Whip up a batch for your four-legged friends and prepare for a wag-fest!

No-Bake Coconut Snowballs

In a food processor, combine 2½ cups old-fashioned rolled oats, ⅓ cup coconut oil and 2½ tbsp. unsweetened peanut butter; pulse until oats are finely chopped. Roll into bite-size balls, about 1 inch in diameter, then roll in ⅓ cup unsweetened shredded coconut, pressing to coat. Place snowballs on a parchment-lined rimmed baking sheet. Refrigerate at least 30 minutes. Makes about 3 dozen.

Recipe reviewed by the ASPCA. Every pet is different, so check with your vet to see if this recipe is suitable for your dog.

BONUS! Tuck kibble or other small treats into the center of each ball!

Whether I've been naughty or nice, who could look at this face and deny me a treat?

—Cooper, 3, Labradoodle

ANOTHER DOG SAVED

Dreamer

7-YEAR-OLD SHIH TZU

HIS NEW 'RENTS

Nancy and Charles Sherwood, who adopted him from Mostly Mutts, a shelter in Sunbury, PA *(mostlymuttsonline.com)*

FREE RANGE

Mostly Mutts divides dogs into small packs among seven buildings, so special needs are easier to meet—lucky for Dreamer, who arrived scared and unsocialized, says founder Cheryl Hill.

DREAM TEAM

Despite being petrified by people, Dreamer connected instantly to the Sherwoods and their two other shih tzus. "Now, if he gets scared, he'll just get in bed with one of them," Nancy says.

FEAR NOT

Some of the cutest proof of how far Dreamer has come? "He rides to the store in my husband's lap during paper runs," Nancy says. "Rescue dogs always end up paying you back for your love a million times over."

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COCONUT SNOWBALLS BY PETER ARDITO, FOOD STYLING BY MICHELLE GATTON.

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Tracee Ellis Ross

Ross, the star of ABC's hit comedy *Black-ish*, is renowned among her friends for her killer salad-making skills. Witness what happened when she whipped up one of Rachael's refreshing recipes at her home in L.A. BY JERYL BRUNNER

WHAT'S YOUR COOKING CRED?

How much time do you like to spend in the kitchen? I actually have a fantasy of running my own restaurant, but it would be more of a café: salads and simple foods. I'm pretty skilled in the kitchen, but anything that takes more than 30 or 45 minutes is too long for me.

Tell us your favorite foods. I'm known as the salad queen. The key to a great one is making it fresh, in the moment—and never using lettuce out of a bag.

Are there any foods you won't eat? I try to stay away from gluten and dairy, though I am a huge lover of cheese.

SO... HOW DID IT GO?

"I love cooking, and I'm not used to following recipes, so this was a fun project. The hardest part was getting to the market! I think my presentation is quite pretty."

OK, THEN MAKE OUR...

Sliced Steaks with Kale Caesar Salad

INGREDIENTS: 4 flatiron steaks (6 to 8 oz. each), at room temperature • ⅓ cup EVOO, plus more for coating • 1 lemon, juiced • 2 cloves garlic, grated or pasted • 1 tsp. anchovy paste • 1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce • 1 tsp. Dijon mustard • 1 organic egg yolk • a generous handful grated Pecorino-Romano, plus more for shaving • 1 bunch flat-leaf Tuscan kale, stems discarded, leaves chopped or sliced • 1 romaine heart, chopped or sliced

INSTRUCTIONS: Heat a griddle or cast-iron skillet over medium-high. Season the steaks with salt and pepper and coat with EVOO. Cook the steaks, turning once, 10 minutes. Transfer to a cutting board; let rest 10 minutes. Thinly slice on an angle. In a salad bowl, combine the lemon juice, garlic, anchovy paste, Worcestershire and mustard; season heavily with pepper. Using a fork, mix in the egg yolk, then pour in ⅓ cup EVOO in a slow, steady stream to emulsify the dressing. Stir in a handful of the grated cheese. Add the kale and romaine and toss to coat. Top the salad with shaved cheese and serve alongside the sliced steak. Serves 4.

Fresh off the tree!

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KATE MATHIS; FOOD STYLING BY MAGGIE RUGGIERO; PROP STYLING BY BRIAN HEISER. PORTRAIT BY AMANDA EDWARDS/WIREIMAGE; ALL OTHER PHOTOS COURTESY OF TRACEE ELLIS ROSS.

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